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EUROPE
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WEEKEND
EDITION



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Preakness143
PIMLICO, MAY 19, 2018

STARS AND STRIPES.®

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Volume 77, No. 23 ©SS 2018 **FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2018**

平成30年4月5日 第三種郵便物認可 日刊(土日除く)
発行所 星島新聞社 〒106-0032 東京都港区六本木7丁目2番17号 定価 ¥100

\$1.00

A **daunting** to-do list

New threats from North Korea add to challenges of planning summit between Trump, Kim Jong Un

By CATHERINE LUCEY, ZEKI MILLER AND MATTHEW LEE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Who sits where? What's on the agenda? Will they eat together? What's the security plan?

President Donald Trump and his team have a daunting to-do list to work through as they prepare for next month's expected summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Trump's plan to meet with Kim may have come as a surprise decision, but his team hopes to leave nothing to chance when they come together in Singapore. They're gaming out policy plans, negotiating tactics, even menu items.

"We're working on the details, the actual blocking and tackling at the meeting," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Sunday on CBS' "Face the Nation." "We have been working on them for weeks."

With two unpredictable leaders, it's hard to anticipate every possibility. But White House aides are expecting hard-ball negotiating tactics — already in evidence this week as the North Koreans cast fresh doubt on the sit-down.

North Korea threatened early Wednesday to scrap the summit, saying it has no interest in a "one-sided" affair meant to pressure the North to abandon its nuclear weapons. But Trump later appeared to shrug off the warning saying the U.S. hadn't been notified.

SEE SUMMIT ON PAGE 2



Reservists fight to clear names in Army housing allowance probe

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A few hours before he was lauded by U.S. Africa Command brass for a 30-year military career that culminated in helping run day-to-day operations at his Stuttgart headquarters, Richard Gulley was read his rights, fingerprinted and treated like a crook by Army investigators.

Gulley, a reservist colonel with top secret clearances and a seat at the table on discussions about some of AFRICOM's most sensitive missions, stood accused of getting a housing allowance for which Army



Gulley

finance officials say he wasn't qualified.

But Gulley, like a growing number of reservists who have been snared in a dispute with the Army over their right to certain living allowances, says he is the victim of an investigative process in Europe that has run amok, as finance officials and agents from the Criminal Investigation Command are operating with little oversight.

"This is a complete dereliction of duty. I want them to know I will never stop fighting until my name is cleared," Gulley said.

His case is much like that of seven Army Reserve officers who filed a lawsuit in federal court against the Army in April, accusing the service of "gross negligence" for withholding basic allowance for housing, or BAH, and imposing debts for past payments received. Like Gulley, the soldiers were criminally processed, accused of larceny and fraud and issued general officer reprimands.

In recent years, the Army has made a point of cracking down on cases where it sees abuses in the allocation of allowances.

In 2012, the Army's 266th Financial Management Center in Kaiserslautern, Germany, won a servicewide award for a project that "eliminated erroneous payments of Basic Allowance for Housing," producing more than \$3.5 million in savings.

But in their push to find savings, Army finance officers are coming under scrutiny for improperly interpreting regulations and imposing rules designed for full-time active-duty troops on reservists, who have different entitlements.

At least 140 reserve soldiers — and possibly as many as 350 — were caught up in investigations over the past couple years in

SEE HOUSING ON PAGE 4

PACIFIC

Summit: Key concern for US team is what to put on bargaining table

FROM FRONT PAGE

“We haven’t seen anything, we haven’t heard anything,” Trump said as he welcomed the president of Uzbekistan to the White House. “We will see what happens.”

Leader summits on this level are a massive undertaking. Much like icebergs, only a small fraction of the work is visible above the waterline. And when the meeting involves the heads of two technically still-warring states, the list of logistical concerns expands, including sensitive items like the number and deployment of security officers. Officials on both sides are still determining the format for the meeting or meetings, whether Trump and Kim will share a meal, and the extent of any one-on-one interactions.

All of that comes as the U.S. formulates its strategies for the talks, including what the U.S. is prepared to give up and how precisely to define “denuclearization” on the Korean Peninsula — Trump’s stated goal.

“I would say there are hundreds if not thousands of hours put into summit preparations,” said Patrick McEachern, a public policy fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center and a former State Department official.

Scott Mulhauser, a former chief of staff at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, said that in the leadup to summit meetings, staffs try to anticipate the various negotiating positions their counterparts might take, adding that “if you’re not gaming that out, you’re not preparing adequately.”

Trump is relying heavily on his

top diplomat, Mike Pompeo, in preparing for the summit. Pompeo has met with Kim twice in Pyongyang, once as secretary of state and once as CIA chief, and has spent more time with the reclusive leader than any other American official. The amount of face time Pompeo has had with Kim rivals even that of most Asian leaders, apart from the Chinese.

Pompeo assembled a working group to handle negotiations with North Korea led by a retired senior CIA official with deep experience in the region. That team, based at CIA headquarters in Langley, Va., remains the center of the administration’s North Korea expertise.

Planning for the summit started quickly after Trump announced on Twitter his plans to meet with Kim, but kicked into higher gear after John Bolton became Trump’s national security adviser last month. In addition to Pompeo’s two trips to Pyongyang, U.S. officials have also been coordinating with the North Koreans through what’s known as the “New York channel” — North Korean diplomats posted to their country’s mission to the United Nations.

A key question is the format for the meeting if the two countries are able to proceed to full-fledged nuclear negotiations, U.S. officials have said. That includes decisions about whether to keep the talks limited to the U.S. and North Korea or whether to bring other governments into the process, such as South Korea, China,

Russia and Japan. Also key is what the U.S. will negotiate away.

“One thing that is unclear to us is what the U.S. is willing to negotiate in exchange for North Korea’s promises on denuclearization,” said Jean Lee, director of the North Korea program at the Woodrow Wilson Center and a former Associated Press bureau chief in Pyongyang. “The North Koreans are going to be armed and very ready to negotiate. The Trump administration needs to be ready as well.”

One initial hurdle that Pompeo managed to clear during his second visit to Pyongyang was the venue for the summit. North Korea was adamant that Kim not be put in any kind of situation where his security could be at risk, U.S. officials said. North Korean officials pushed very hard for the meeting to be in Pyongyang, so Kim would not have to leave the country and they could have 100 percent control over access and communications, according to the officials.

When North Korea objected to Trump’s preferred choice of the demilitarized zone on the border between North and South Korea, the U.S. countered with Singapore. Some White House officials also opposed the DMZ choice, believing the optics on Korean rapprochement would distract from the focus on denuclearization.

U.S. officials said they believed one reason the North Koreans agreed to Singapore was that Kim had just returned from a successful trip to China the day before Pompeo arrived for his



KOREAN CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY/Korea News Service via AP

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo shakes hands with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Pyongyang, North Korea. President Donald Trump has relied on Pompeo to prepare for the upcoming summit between the American and North Korean leaders.

second visit. Many analysts, including U.S. officials, believe that Kim’s flight to the Chinese port of Dalian — the first trip abroad by aircraft by a North Korean leader in decades — was likely a test of the country’s ability to safely transport Kim by air. Kim’s previous trips to China had all been by train, as was the custom of his father.

The North formally signed off on Singapore while Pompeo was in Pyongyang. Even before Trump announced the summit site by tweet a day after Pompeo’s return, White House officials who traveled with Pompeo to Pyongyang were already on the ground in Singapore to begin working out

summit logistics.

Very few people have had much direct contact with the North Koreans, so there are few people for the Trump administration to check with for guidance.

Bill Richardson, the former New Mexico governor and U.N. ambassador who has negotiated with the North Koreans, had one suggestion. He said that in the meeting setting, the North Koreans will be very formal, so building a rapport between the two will be vital.

His main advice: “Try to find some private time between President Trump and Kim Jong Un.”

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PACIFIC

'Material issue' found during Reagan sea trials

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — America's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier's upcoming deployment will be delayed because of a "material issue," the Navy said Thursday.

The USS Ronald Reagan returned to its Yokosuka homeport Thursday after completing a week of pre-deployment sea trials. That same day, the service announced that carrier-landing practice would be delayed, partly to address an issue that arose on the ship over the past week.

"USS Ronald Reagan successfully completed Sea Trials on [Thursday]. However, during operational testing and verification of all systems during Sea Trials, a material issue was identified that requires repair," said Lt. Cmdr. Matt Knight, a Task Force 70 spokesman.

"The repair will result in a delay to the scheduled departure date for USS Ronald Reagan and



MACADAM WEISSMAN
Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Cmdr. Stephen Weeks monitors the USS Ronald Reagan's course Thursday as it returns to Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan.

Carrier Strike Group 5."

Knight did not provide further details about the issue, including how long the delay was expected to last.



KENNETH ABBATE/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Sailors perform a countermeasure washdown last week on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan in waters south of Japan.

A separate Navy statement issued Thursday announced that carrier-landing drills for Carrier Air Wing 5 pilots were being delayed for "operational reasons." The day-and-night training that enables them to meet qualifications was originally scheduled to take place May 3-13, mostly at Iwo Jima — a remote island known in Japan as Iwo To.

After the land-based training, the pilots were to conduct day and night landings on the Ronald Reagan, Knight told Stars and Stripes

in an email last month.

The majority of the training is still expected to take place on Iwo Jima when new dates are announced, the Navy said.

Aircraft involved include F/A-18E and F/A-18F Super Hornet strike jets, EA-18G Growler electronic warfare planes, E-2D Advanced Hawkeye early warning aircraft and C-2A Greyhound transports.

During the sea trials, the Ronald Reagan's crew practiced high-speed turns and precision

anchoring and tested the ship's self-defense weapons system.

Capt. Buzz Donnelly, the Ronald Reagan's commanding officer, said the ship "performed remarkably well."

"The crew's training and preparation was a primary factor during all of the evolutions, and they should feel very good about the fact that they came in well-prepared and executed as well as they did," he said in a Navy statement.

doornbos.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @CaitlinDoornbos



Courtesy of Pixabay

The Philippine government has ordered gas-guzzling Jeepneys to be phased out to cut traffic congestion and pollution.

Jeepneys going electric in Philippines

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

The days of the Philippines' iconic Jeepney vehicles may be numbered — at least the version familiar to American servicemembers and veterans who've spent time in the islands.

The Philippine government, eager to cut traffic congestion and pollution, has ordered the gas-guzzling Jeepneys to be phased out. The vehicles, which evolved from Jeeps left behind by U.S. forces at the end of World War II, are ubiquitous in the islands with their brightly painted bodywork and distinctive radiator grills.

An initial batch of modern electric Jeepneys is due to start serving met-

ropolitan Manila next month, the Manila Standard newspaper reported last week. Similar vehicles are already on the roads in other parts of the country.

A ride in a traditional Jeepney across Angeles City costs about the equivalent of a quarter, said John Gilbert, 70, a former Army noncommissioned officer living in the Philippines. These days, it's possible to travel around nearby Clark Air Base in the vehicles.

Gilbert said he rode in an electric Jeepney on a recent trip to Cebu.

"They're clean, quiet and don't produce quite the same smells although they probably will over time," he said of the new vehicles.

Growth of the Philippines' economy means more cars on the roads and the

spread of traffic from Manila to other cities and towns. Electric Jeepneys, which carry more passengers, will help cut congestion, Gilbert said.

But the change isn't welcomed by everyone. Jeepney drivers, who typically own and operate their own vehicles, have protested the government's plans.

Electric Jeepneys cost more than most of the drivers can afford, and the change will force them to become contract employees rather than independent business owners, Gilbert said.

"The future is clearly the non-polluting electric higher capacity vehicles, but it has not been embraced by all," he said.

robson.seth@stripes.com
Twitter: @SethRobson

CENTCOM deputy tapped to lead PACAF

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — U.S. Central Command's deputy commander has been nominated to head the Hawaii-based Pacific Air Forces, the Pentagon said Wednesday.

Lt. Gen. Charles Brown Jr., if confirmed, will be promoted to general and also become executive director of Pacific Air Combat Operations Staff at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. He would replace Gen. Terrence O'Shaughnessy, who is awaiting final confirmation by the full Senate to take the helm of U.S. Northern Command.

Brown would command roughly 46,000 military and civilian personnel based primarily in Hawaii, Alaska, Japan, Guam and South Korea. About 1,700 airmen are deployed at any given time in the region. About 320 fighter and attack aircraft are assigned to Pacific Air Forces, with another 100 aircraft rotating on deployments to Guam.

Brown was commissioned in 1984 and obtained a master's in aeronautical science in 1994 from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Fla. He has commanded a fighter squadron, the U.S. Air Force Weapons School and two fighter wings, including the 8th Fighter Wing, dubbed the "Wolf Pack," at Kunsan Air Base, South Korea.

Prior to his assignment at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., Brown headed U.S. Air Forces Central Command from June 2015 to July 2016. In that role, he led the aerial campaign against the Islamic State, which held territories in Iraq and Syria. He has more than 2,900 flight hours, including 120 combat hours, in everything from F-16 fighters and B-1B bombers to C-130J cargo planes, the Air Force said.

Among his decorations are the Bronze Star and the Legion of Merit with three bronze oak leaf clusters.

olson.wyatt@stripes.com
Twitter: @WyattOlson



Brown

MILITARY

Housing: Allowance dispute upends reservists' careers

FROM FRONT PAGE

Europe, according to the federal complaint filed by soldiers that could grow into a class action case. Millions of dollars could be at stake if the case moves forward.

Soldiers say the investigations have crippled their finances, caused hassles abroad and damaged their future job prospects.

Patrick Hughes, a Washington-based attorney representing at least seven soldiers in the lawsuit against the Army, says what's missing is greater oversight from Congress on abuses by finance officials and agents for the Criminal Investigation Command, which is commonly referred to as CID, a throwback to the days when it was the Army's Criminal Investigation Division.

"However, to date Congress has continued to defer to the Army and refused to take any substantial investigative steps," said Hughes, a former judge advocate general who runs Patriots Law Group with a group of former military attorneys.

The Defense Financing and Accounting Service, which standardizes finance functions throughout the military, has already reviewed the case of one plaintiff, Col. Bradley Wolfing, and found that the Army erroneously owed Wolfing's BAH benefits, Hughes said.

High honors, mugshot

For Gulley, the investigation came to a head as he was preparing to retire from the Army. On June 30, AFRICOM chief of staff Maj. Gen. Roger Cloutier officiated at a retirement ceremony in Stuttgart with 100 people in attendance.

AFRICOM commander Gen. Thomas Waldhauser signed off on one of the military's highest noncombat medals—the Defense Superior Service Medal—which was presented to Gulley during the ceremony.

"The distinctive accomplishments of Colonel Gulley reflect great credit upon himself, the United States Army, and the Department of Defense," Waldhauser wrote.

It came only hours after CID agents read him his rights and an official letter of reprimand was put in his file. As a well-paid commercial pilot in civilian life, Gulley said he can financially rebound from the \$103,000 debt imposed by the Army in connection with the accusation that he shouldn't have been paid BAH.

But the consequences are hurting him on the job. The Army never prosecuted, but every time Gulley pilots an international flight, he is stopped for questioning by police at customs. The

electronic trail of charges means he's been flagged. He also can't obtain a gun permit, which compromises his ability to protect the cockpit, Gulley said.

"Why was I arrested at all? Why is it still on my record, and why do I get stopped at customs every single time?" he asked.

Gulley also said he was subjected to harassment from CID agents, who stalked out his home in Germany, followed him around and questioned neighbors back at his New York City home as part of their investigation.

In addition, scores of senior AFRICOM officials got sucked into the probe, Gulley charged.

"At one point, I had AFRICOM's legal adviser threaten me and my wife. He started pointing his finger at me, shouting 'Never talk to me again.' My wife started crying."

Other reservists describe similar tangles. One Army captain in Wiesbaden blamed his wife's miscarriage on stress from the Army's investigation, which resulted in massive debts and criminal probes.

'Wasteful and inept'

Army finance officials in Europe declined to comment on the cases or cite the specific federal regulations that justified criminal probes, referring questions to public affairs officials.

An Army spokesman said it can't comment on the matter, citing "ongoing litigation."

At issue is the distinction between benefits owed full-time servicemembers and reservists.

When reservists mobilize overseas, they receive BAH because they cannot work the civilian jobs that pay their mortgages and rent. They also receive overseas housing allowance when ordered by the Army to live off post, as the plaintiffs were in Germany because of a lack of available housing. Most full-time troops get one or the other.

The benefit for reservists are spelled out in the Joint Federal Travel Regulations, which govern how allowances are paid: "A Service member called/ordered to active duty in support of a contingency operation is authorized primary residence-based BAH/OHA beginning on the first active duty day ... This rate continues for the duration of the tour."

A "Criminal Prevention Flyer" distributed by the CID office in Wiesbaden to various commands, and obtained by Stars and Stripes, gives some insight into the Army's reasoning.

The January 2017 CID flyer described the issue of BAH fraud as a "hot topic" because of an increase in cases over the past few years.

"Due to this ongoing trend, the Army has been taking measures

to crack down on BAH/OHA fraud by conducting local audits and targeted investigations with the assistance of local CID," the memo said, Gulley said.

Typical fraud cases involve soldiers using a false home of record to obtain a higher BAH rate, claiming dependents when there are none or using false rental contracts to get higher OHAs.

The memo also refers to unique situations involving reservists. The problem, according to CID, begins when reserve soldiers deployed on an unaccompanied tour bring their families to join them at some point. Though the soldiers bear the costs of flying families over, the fact that the families have reunited is cause for severing payments, according to the CID flyer.

"The Soldiers fail to turn off these entitlements wherein they then begin to receive the unauthorized funds," the memo says.

However, the memo does not cite the actual regulation the reservists violated. The CID agent responsible for the memo didn't respond to a request for comment.

Reservist Maj. Robert Feldmeier, a senior Army defense counsel who represents Gulley, submitted a complaint to the inspector general in connection with accusations that finance and CID officials in Europe lack a basic understanding of the regulations.

Feldmeier's IG complaint recommended the 21st Theater Sustainment Command's finance office get retrained, that CID suspend investigations while a "qualified attorney" reviews the office's various mistakes and disciplinary measures be taken against those who launched "unwarranted investigations."

So far, Gulley and his lawyer haven't gotten a response.

Feldmeier, who accompanied Gulley during questioning by CID in 2017, has called the probe "wasteful and inept."

"Stuttgart (CID) has spent hundreds of man hours and tens of thousands of dollars investigating a theory of criminal liability," Feldmeier wrote in an official rebuttal to Gulley's general officer reprimand. During one interview with CID, an agent "had, by her own admission, never read the JTR. Her total lack of knowledge concerning pay allowances, however, did not stop her and her colleagues from opening investigations into purported allowance fraud."

Career killers

Provisions in the JTR were put into place after the Defense Department urged Congress in 2006 to take action to avoid the financial hardship "that my clients and the other Reserve com-



Capt. Alexander Gardiner

Maj. Gen. Roger Cloutier, U.S. Africa Command's chief of staff, left, stands with Col. Richard Gulley during his June 30 retirement ceremony in Stuttgart, Germany. Gulley and other reservists say they were unfairly targeted by Army investigators over housing benefits.

ponent members affected are enduring now," Hughes said. "It is our claim that the Army is going against the very thing that the DOD fought for in the first place."

Alleviating hardships on the reserve force became a priority during that time, when reservists were mobilized to Iraq and Afghanistan on lengthy deployments to support an active duty stretched too thin.

But Gulley, who served three combat tours and received the Combat Action Badge during one of them, said the treatment of reservists in the battle over benefits is an example of how they are treated as second-class citizens by the Army.

For some soldiers involved in the dispute, the consequences have been financially and professionally devastating.

Capt. Alexander Gardiner, who was activated from the U.S. for an assignment in Wiesbaden in 2016, says he also was wrongly investigated and is a party to the lawsuit seeking damages.

"It has basically ruined my career and any prospects of getting a job in the future that pulls a security check on me," Gardiner said.

Already, Gardiner said, he had an offer for a federal job withdrawn when they saw his record.

In addition, an administrative flag has prevented Gardiner from signing up for required military education in order to get promoted. A letter of reprimand placed in his permanent file is

"effectively killing my career," he said.

vandiver.john@stripes.com
Twitter: @john_vandiver



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WAR/MILITARY

Taliban resume attack on capital of key province in Afghanistan

By J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

Fighting resumed in the capital of strategically important Farah province Wednesday night as Taliban attacks prompted gunbattles and two U.S. drone strikes.

The clashes late Wednesday have subsided, and the city of 55,000 people is currently under government control, a coalition spokesman said early Thursday.

During the attack, the Taliban targeted the local police chief's office, residents and officials told Kabul's TOLO news channel. They said three suicide bombs were detonated near the police station and other government buildings.

The Taliban confirmed that their fighters had withdrawn Wednesday morning, only to return hours later with a renewed assault.

Some Taliban fighters hid in people's houses, while others retreated from the city, said Khair Mohammad Noorzai, Farah provincial council member.

Afghan security forces searched houses but had to defuse booby traps left behind by

the guerrillas, Noorzai said.

The Education Ministry said schools in Farah would remain closed until security improves.

The attack was the first on a provincial capital this year. The Taliban now control much of Farah province, a key drug route between the border with Iran and Taliban-held areas of Helmand province in the south. Capture of the provincial capital would block the region's main highway to Kabul.

The attacks on Farah are similar to Taliban offensives that captured the provincial capital of Kunduz in 2015, said Thomas Ruttig, co-director of the Afghanistan Analysts Network. For five months, militants staged constant attacks from the outskirts of Kunduz before a final rush to take the city.

"The Taliban have positioned themselves in Farah city's suburbs for a long time, at least since 2016," he said. "Their latest approach might be to expand from there into the cities themselves, as Farah cities look more like villages in their outskirts, and the divide between city and countryside is not that clear."

Hiding in the suburbs also means airstrikes against Taliban positions could lead to more civilian casualties, Ruttig added.

Afghan and coalition forces said airstrikes Tuesday night had driven the Taliban from Farah.

These airstrikes are like late-game touchdowns in a football game already lost, said retired Lt. Col. Dan Davis, a longtime critic of the coalition's war effort who served in Afghanistan and sees similarities between Farah and Kunduz.

"Just because there are some small pieces of a win there, that doesn't change that after 17 years of intensive and extremely expensive efforts, we're not accomplishing anything on a strategic level," Davis said to Stars and Stripes.

Elsewhere in Afghanistan on Wednesday, the Taliban attacked security posts in three districts in Ghazni province, the Defense Ministry said. The ministry also reported 20 airstrikes and operations in 12 of 34 provinces.

Zubair Babarkarkhail contributed to this report from Kabul, Afghanistan.
lawrence.jp@stripes.com
Twitter: @jplawrence3

Refueling crews gather for symposium in UK

By WILLIAM HOWARD
Stars and Stripes

RAF MILDENHALL, England — Since Monday, airmen of the 100th Air Refueling Wing have been sharing best practices and lessons learned with NATO allies while hosting the European Tanker Symposium for military counterparts from 10 countries.

The fifth edition of the annual event, which ends Friday, is the largest gathering of participants yet for the tanker symposium. It included airmen from the United States, the U.K., France, Turkey, Belgium, the Netherlands, Australia, Romania, Spain, Poland and Germany.

"The big purpose here is how do we standardize our procedures for mixed formation, for aircraft so we can enhance in-flight refueling with our NATO partners," said 100th ARW vice commander Col. David Lenderman.

A mixed formation is when aircraft of varying types fly together, as when a fighter jet receives fuel from a KC-135 Stratotanker.

What may be a simple exercise for one air force becomes more complicated when jets from several NATO allies are involved.

"With our partner nations hav-



WILLIAM HOWARD/Stars and Stripes

A Royal Air Force A330 Voyager takes off from RAF Mildenhall, England, to fly with U.S. military aircraft as part of the 2018 European Tanker Symposium hosted by the 100th Air Refueling Wing on Thursday.

ing different aircraft, it's a little bit different," said Lt. Col. Tim Mach, deputy group commander of the 100th Operations Group. "Our mixed formation now is having different countries flying with the same set of rules, standards, techniques and procedures."

British Ft. Lt. Elizabeth Herbert said many procedures remain unchanged.

"That's the whole point of it really. If we can maintain these techniques, then it doesn't matter what aircraft we may have in the future," she said.



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MILITARY

Loss of data forces Marines to make changes

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The Marine Corps has changed the way it handles personal information after a servicemember lost a disk containing the data of 164,000 people who registered a vehicle for Okinawa base access between January 2007 and September 2017.

On Sept. 22, an airman with Okinawa's Joint Services Vehicle Registration Office at Camp Foster handed the disk to an Air Force security officer from Kadena Air Base. That security officer was tasked with bringing the disk — which was not password protected or encrypted — to Kadena security forces' headquarters, where the data were to be uploaded into the Air Force system.

The disk was never seen again. It contained names, Social Security numbers, driver's license information, ID numbers, physical descriptions of personnel, vehicle identification numbers and plate numbers, service branch and duty information for servicemembers, dependents, civilian federal employees, contractors and local national master labor contractors.

While the Marine Corps said there are no signs the disk was sold, stolen or found by someone with nefarious intentions, the affected people — including some registered for government services — have been asked to safeguard their identity and credit.

Numerous changes to the way personal data is stored and distributed by the U.S. military on Okinawa

‘There is no evidence that the CD was stolen or that the information on the CD has been misused in any way.’

Marine Corps statement

nawa have been made; however, a report on the incident provided to Stars and Stripes by the Marine Corps suggests it was preventable, and that unsafe practices have knowingly been used for years.

The data were haphazardly handled on removable media devices, and there were no standard operating procedures for passing the data between services. Servicemembers didn't know how to password-protect disks containing sensitive data.

While the Marine Corps system that contained the data was encrypted, there was no centralized system accessible by all service branches, making the rudimentary passing of disks between servicemembers necessary.

The Marine Corps acknowledged as far back as 2010 that the system needed to be modernized and all service branches given access to its database, but none of the branches or commands servicing Okinawa did anything beyond a few preliminary meetings.

Protecting personally identifiable information “is a continuous effort that requires all to maintain a heightened sense of vigilance,” Marine Corps Installations Pacific spokesman 1st Lt. Edward Pingel wrote in a statement to Stars and

Stripes. “The causes for recent losses ... vary, but we will continue to instill awareness and training to servicemembers to mitigate such losses from reoccurring,” Pingel wrote that “the standard operating procedures that led to this loss were introduced by individuals no longer associated with the United States Marine Corps.”

However, the report about the lost disk says no procedures existed. “There are no Standard Operating Procedures written that direct the members of JSVRO how to pass law enforcement data between the separate services across Okinawa,” the preliminary investigation report said.

The disk — which contained information from the Marine Corps Installations Pacific's Joint Vehicle Registration and Licensing Database — was created Sept. 21 by a registration office employee, according to the report.

Other service branches did not have access to the Marine system, so the disks were used monthly to update Air Force, Army and Navy law enforcement at bases around the island. Disks were passed to servicemembers from the other bases who would harvest the data and return the disks.

The Sept. 21 disk was handed

off the next day and was reported lost five days later.

“Immediately after the loss of the CD was discovered, the U.S. military began a comprehensive search and conducted an inquiry into our own processes for collecting, storing and transporting personal information,” a Marine Corps statement said. “There is no evidence that the CD was stolen or that the information on the CD has been misused in any way.”

An investigation led by Marine Maj. Jason Crumbacher found that the breach should have never happened.

In 2010, Marine officials approached the registration office and base safety representatives about modernizing the database and held meetings with all service branches about getting access to the system.

From inception of the JVRL database, “the lowest levels of supervision recognized the need for and pursued a secure way to share sensitive data,” Marine officials said in the report. “All available options were explored and were ultimately not employed for financial or logistical reasons, leaving transfer via CD the only option.”

Marine officials also found that staff at the registration office had never heard of the government's safe access file exchange system, called the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Research, Development and Engineering Command Safe Access File Exchange. This system is widely recognized among journalists, civilian researchers and Defense Department employees as a method of sharing

documents.

The disk was never found, the report states. Marine officials declined to provide an explanation from the airman who lost the disk, nor would they say whether anyone involved was punished. The investigation was closed Jan. 23, Marine officials said.

“As with any loss of data, it is critical for individuals whose data was lost to monitor their credit scores and take other steps to ensure their identity and protect their information from misuse,” Pingel wrote in the Marine statement.

The Marine Corps has implemented several changes to the way personal information is handled at the registration office on Okinawa. No more disks are being passed. Marine Corps Installations Pacific is working with the Marine Corps Cyberbase Operations Group to grant access for other services to the JVRJ system. Marine spokesman Gunnery Sgt. Derek Colksen said in a statement to Stars and Stripes. Personal information refresher training is being held.

The registration offices are reviewing the database to purge any records that are no longer required for “operational use or required to be maintained due to records retention policies or statutes.”

On Dec. 15, letters were sent to those affected by the breach, offering identity protection and credit-monitoring services.

Out of more than 164,000 people, only 361 signed up, said Barbara Hamby, a Marine Corps Systems Command spokeswoman.

burke.matt@starsandstripes.com

Court affirms acquittals in child's amusement park death

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
AND MARCUS KLOECKNER
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — A German appeals court has ruled that two Holiday Park employees were not responsible for the 2014 death of a former U.S. soldier's daughter on a family ride, even though the men were found to have been lax in some of their duties.

The employees were acquitted of negligent homicide last month in Zweibrücken Higher Regional Court. They faced up to five years in prison.

Under German law, the names of defendants acquitted of a crime cannot be released.

Holiday Park, located in the countryside outside Hassloch, near Speyer, is one of Germany's most popular theme parks. It's a frequent destination for American servicemembers and their families who are stationed an hour or less away at bases in the state of Rheinland-Pfalz and throughout Germany.

Amber Walker, 11, was killed on Aug. 15, 2014, on Spinning Barrels, a family attraction that spins riders in barrel-shaped seats atop rotating platforms.

Prosecutors maintained that the two supervisors shared blame with the ride operator for a series of careless mistakes that allowed Amber and her mother, Claudia Walker, to gain access to the platform

seconds before the ride started.

Among those mistakes was an unexplained entry gate to the ride that was left open and a failure by the ride's operator to announce the ride was about to begin. The ride started while Amber and Walker were standing on one of the platforms, throwing Amber between the moving platforms. She died from traumatic injuries.

The operator of the ride, Thanujan Tharmathurai, 22, was found guilty of negligent homicide in 2016. Tharmathurai, a Kaiserslautern university student at the time, he was ordered by the local court in Neustadt to pay a fine of 2,400 euros (about \$2,800). He received no prison time.

Tharmathurai did not make an announcement warning the ride was about to start, but he said in court that he was not trained to do so.

The court acquitted Tharmathurai's bosses — a training supervisor and operations manager — of negligent homicide.

Prosecutors appealed the verdict, together with Walker and Amber's father, Edmond Walker, a light-weight vehicle mechanic assigned to U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden at the time of the accident. They alleged the two men didn't follow basic rules and failed to train and supervise Tharmathurai properly.

Last summer, the district court in Frankfurt rejected the appeal.

In upholding the lower courts' ruling,



Photo courtesy of Claudia Walker

Amber Walker, then 10, stands between her parents, Claudia and Edmond, at Heidelberg Castle in 2013. Amber was killed on a ride at Holiday Park in Hassloch, Germany, in August 2014. Germany's highest court cleared the supervisors of an operator, who previously were found guilty of criminal negligence.

the Zweibrücken court found that the supervisors did not perform adequate checks if the rides and of the park attendants operating the rides. But the court said it could not prove that Amber's death would have been prevented if the managers had better supervised the operator of the ride, according to a court news release summarizing the verdict.

Witnesses testified that the operator did not always follow basic procedures, leading the court to reason that even if the manager and supervisor had told Tharmathurai to announce the start of the ride with a microphone, there was no guarantee he would have done so, the release said.

Claudia Walker said this week from her home in Keltersbach that she disagreed with the high court's ruling.

“If you have an employee that is responsible for the lives of people and he doesn't follow instructions from the supervisors' job to fire him,” she said. If the supervisor “and the operations manager did their job, Amber would still be alive because the start of the ride would have been announced.”

The high court's ruling cannot be appealed, said Daniela Reuter, a court spokeswoman.

svan.jennifer@starsandstripes.com
kloeckner.marcus@starsandstripes.com

VETERANS

New vet ID cards mailed

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs has finally mailed thousands of new, free identification cards to veterans after months of setbacks and delays.

As of Monday, the VA mailed 10,735 cards — fulfilling requests for about one-tenth of the veterans who applied for one. More than 15,000 other veterans have been approved for the card, and the VA is working through another 72,000 applications.

Each card is adorned with an Office Depot logo — a symbol of the company's new partnership with the VA. Office Depot paid the cost of printing and mailing the cards.

When an early design of the card with the logo appeared in November, some veterans criticized it as an avenue for corporations to buy government influence. VA Press Secretary Curt Cashour hailed it as an innovative idea.

"This is precisely the type of outside-the-box thinking that has been missing from the federal government for far too long and that we are bringing to the table under the leadership of President [Donald Trump]," ordered the VA in 2015 to create the card to make it easier for veterans to receive discounts at stores and restaurants without having to carry

around their DD-214 — a certificate of release or discharge that contains sensitive information.

Lawmakers did not appropriate funding to print and mail the cards, so the VA went to Office Depot with the idea for a partnership, Cashour said. The VA did not say how much the partnership cost Office Depot and an Office Depot representative did not respond to a request for information on the amount that the company paid for printing and mailing the cards. Under the logo on the card is a disclaimer that it "does not represent an endorsement of Office Depot's general policies, activities, products or services."

Office Depot will continue printing and mailing the cards until September 2020, Cashour said.

Veterans can apply for the cards at vets.gov, under "Apply for Printed Veteran ID Card." Veterans applying for a card will be asked to create an online account and must upload a valid, government-issued ID and recent photo.

The new IDs do not replace VA medical cards or defense retiree cards, nor do they qualify as official government-issued identification.

The cards were intended to be mailed late last year, but demand for the cards crashed the VA website in December. The VA temporarily stopped the application process until late January. In March, the VA again delayed their distribution.



JOHN MINICILLA/AP

Preview of Memphis Belle exhibit

United States Air Force (Ret.) Col. Howard Hunt, center, meets Wednesday with Memphis Belle fans during the private viewing of the Boeing B-17 "Flying Fortress" at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force in Dayton, Ohio. The World War II bomber Memphis Belle is set to go on display for the first time since getting a yearlong restoration at the museum. The B-17 "Flying Fortress" was to be introduced Thursday morning as the anchor of an extensive exhibit in the Dayton-area museum's World War II gallery.

House OKs plan to hike private-sector care for vets, fix VA funding crisis

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — House lawmakers approved sweeping legislation Wednesday that changes rules dictating when veterans can go outside the Department of Veterans Affairs for medical treatment, which fulfills a promise made by President Donald Trump to give veterans more choice over their health care.

Lawmakers voted 347-70 in favor of the bill. The vote comes after more than a year of negotiations between Republicans and Democrats about changes to the VA's private-sector care programs. The Congressional Budget Office estimated the bill would cost nearly \$52 billion.

In addition to altering eligibility criteria for veterans to access private-sector health care, the bill would extend benefits for veteran caregivers and initiate a nationwide review of VA infrastructure, among other reforms. Rep. Phil Roe, R-Tenn., the chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, called it transformational.

"Together, these provisions would fortify the VA health care system and make sure it stays strong and able to provide the care that it's meant to provide," Roe said on the House floor. "This is a historic opportunity to fundamentally shape and improve the second-largest agency in the federal government. The real winners here are our veterans."

The bill is named for Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Rep. Sam Johnson, R-Texas, both of whom were prisoners of war in Viet-

nam, as well as Daniel Akaka, a World War II veteran and former Democratic senator from Hawaii who died in April. His short title is the VA Choice Program.

The Mission Act now goes to the Senate. Leaders of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee support the legislation, but it's uncertain when the chamber might act on it.

"I applaud today's bipartisan House action, and I urge the Senate to follow suit and quickly pass this legislation so we can send this bill to the president's desk," Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., said in a prepared statement. Isakson is the chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Congress is facing a tight deadline. The VA Choice program, the private-sector care program that would be replaced by the new rules outlined in the Mission Act, is struggling with another in a series of budget shortfalls. Acting VA Secretary Robert Wilkie warned lawmakers last week that the Choice program would run out of money as early as May 31, at which point veterans won't be able to secure appointments with private doctors.

The Mission Act provides \$5.2 billion in immediate funding to keep the Choice program operating until the new system is put into place next year.

Through Twitter, Trump has repeatedly called on Congress to pass the Mission Act by Memorial Day, which falls on May 28.

"House votes today on Choice/Mission Act. Who will stand with our Great Vets, caregivers and Veterans Service Organizations?" Trump wrote Wednesday

in a tweet.

In addition to the \$5.2 billion for the Choice program, the Congressional Budget Office estimated it would cost \$46.5 billion to implement the Mission Act during the next five years and increase spending by \$4.5 billion from now until 2028.

To offset some costs, the bill proposes to extend pension reductions for Medicaid-eligible veterans in nursing facilities and continue fees on VA-guaranteed home loans. The cuts were put in place in 2014 when the Choice program was first created. They were set to last until Sept. 30, 2024. The bill would move the end-date through Sept. 30, 2028.

During debate on the future of the VA Choice program, many veterans organizations worried unfettered choice for veterans would erode VA resources and eventually dismantle the agency — an occurrence often referred to as "privatization."

After former VA Secretary David Shulkin was fired in March, he blamed his ouster on disagreements with White House insiders over the program. He said they viewed him as an "obstacle to privatization" of the VA.

But the Mission Act has near-unanimous support from lawmakers, the VA, the White House, and dozens of veterans organizations who celebrated its passage Wednesday.

In its report on the Mission Act released this week, the CBO said the bill is written in a way that would maintain the VA as a gatekeeper to decide when veterans would go into the private sector.

The Choice program allows vet-

erans to seek care in the private sector only if they live more than 40 miles driving distance from a VA facility or have an estimated wait of more than 30 days for an appointment with a VA provider.

The Mission Act would require the VA to grant veterans access to the private sector if veterans and their VA doctors agree it's in their best interest. A host of issues could be considered when making that decision, including whether the veteran faces an "unusual or excessive burden" to accessing a VA facility.

"Many of the regulations that need to be written to implement the program could curtail use," the CBO report states. "For instance, VA would probably require all veterans to be seen by a VA provider before being referred for community care."

The American Federation for Government Employees, a union that represents hundreds of thousands of VA employees, remains opposed to the bill. AFGE claims it will "starve the VA for resources." National Nurses United, the largest organization of registered nurses, wrote to lawmakers, also warning the bill would lead to privatization.

Some Democrats took issue with aspects of the bill, though they generally agreed with most of it. Rep. Tim Walz, D-Minn., the ranking Democrat on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs and a key negotiator on the Mission Act, voted against it Wednesday because he worried it would create funding troubles for the VA next year and in the long term. The increased spending for the bill could trigger potential

cuts when budget caps are reinstated, he said.

"I agree these reforms are needed, and I agree these programs were debated in a logical, fair and open manner. We got much of what needed to be done in this," Walz said. "But I'm suggesting we budget honestly in this so we don't reach a nightmare scenario."

Rep. Rob Woodall, R-Ga., argued Congress wouldn't allow VA programs to be cut.

"We are going to run up against that conversation next year," he said. "The question is, will we have the courage to stand up together and fund those priorities? We have to stand up and say yes to those dollars."

Walz and other Democrats also expressed concerns Wednesday about Congress approving major VA reforms without knowing who will implement them. The agency has been without a permanent secretary since Shulkin was dismissed in March. White House physician Ronny Jackson, Trump's pick to replace Shulkin, withdrew from consideration in late April. A new nominee has yet to be named.

"I am also concerned that without strong leadership in place, this bill will give the Trump administration the cover it needs to slowly privatize VA," Walz said. "Especially if VA is required to cut spending on care provided in VA hospitals, or cut funding for much needed construction and maintenance."

wentling.nikki@stripes.com
Twitter: @nikkiwentling

NATION

Huge ash plume rises as Kilauea erupts anew

BY SOPHIA YAN
AND AUDREY McAVOY
Associated Press

HONOLULU — Hawaii's Kilauea volcano erupted anew before dawn Thursday, shooting a steely gray plume of ash from its summit about 30,000 feet into the sky that began raining down on a nearby town.

The explosion came shortly after 4 a.m. following two weeks of volcanic activity that sent lava flows into neighborhoods and destroyed at least 26 homes.

The explosion probably lasted only a few minutes, and the ash accumulations were minimal, with only trace amounts expected near the volcano, said Mike Poland, a geophysicist with the U.S. Geological Survey.

Some people in the community closest to the volcano slept through the explosion.

Kamali Aton, a spokeswoman for Hawaii County Civil Defense, said she spoke to several relatives and friends in the town called Volcano.

"They said they slept through it. They didn't hear it," Aton said.

Robert Hughes owns the Aloha Junction Bed and Breakfast, about a mile and a half from the crater. He said he did not hear anything either and is in an area that did not get any ash.

So far, he said, Thursday has been a "nice rainy day."

His business has been hit hard by the volcano, once an attraction for visitors. He said he's lost hundreds of reservations and had just three guests Thursday, when he previously had been serving 12 to 14 a day.

One of the guests was a news reporter. The other two were from Italy.

"In the old days, people used to love to come see the volcano. They'd even take their little postcards, burn one corner in the lava flow, mail them off, stuff like that," he said. "Now they're acting like it's all super-dangerous and everything, but it just kind oozes out."

The crater sits within Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, which has been closed since May 11 because of the risk of a more violent eruption.

Officials have said the eruption isn't likely to be dangerous as long as people stay out of the closed park.

Kilauea is one of the world's most active volcanoes. An eruption in 1924 killed one person and sent rocks, ash and dust into the air for 17 days.

Scientists warned on May 9 that a drop in the lava lake at the summit might create conditions for an explosion that could fling ash and boulders the size of refrigerators into the air.

Geologists predicted it would mostly release trapped steam from flash-heated groundwater. Communities a mile or two away may be showered by pea-size fragments or dusted with nontoxic ash, they said.

The volcano has been erupting continuously since 1983. It's one of five volcanoes on Hawaii's Big Island, and the only one currently erupting.



Photos by AP

Members of the Hula Na Mamo O Pu'unanahu hula school perform a hula for Pele, the Hawaiian volcano goddess, on the rim of Kilauea in Hawaii's Volcanoes National Park in April 2003. Pele is an important figure in Hawaiian culture.

Hawaiians invoke volcano goddess

BY JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER
Associated Press

HONOLULU — In rural Hawaii neighborhoods where lava from Kilauea volcano has burned down or threatened to consume the homes, a name often comes up: Pele.

"You can't really predict what Pele is going to do," said Julie Woolsey, who evacuated on May 3 as a fissure opened on her street, oozing lava just 1,000 feet from her home.

Here is more information about Pele and why the goddess is revered:

Who is Pele?

Pele, the goddess of volcanoes and fire, is an important figure in Hawaiian culture.

She represents all the phenomena related to volcanoes — magma, steam, ash, acid rain.

Pele is an akua, or goddess, but not in the way people outside Hawaii might think. "A lot of people translate the word akua as god. But we feel that word has kind of a western connotation to it, so we use the word 'element,'" said Kuulei Kanahele, researcher at the Edith Kanaka'ole Foundation, which focuses on Native Hawaiian cultural preservation and education. "They're not like Greek gods or the biblical, western gods where they're punishing you."

According to chants, Pele and her family migrated from kahiki — an unspecified land outside of Hawaii. She first landed in the northwestern Hawaiian islands before making her way through the main Hawaiian islands, starting with Kauai, then Oahu, then Maui, before settling in Hawaii Island.

She dug craters on the islands, including Maui's Haleakala and what's known as Punchbowl and Diamond Head on Oahu. "She didn't find a crater that was suitable to her liking," Kanahele said, until Kilauea's Halemaumau crater, where she now resides.

Why is she revered?

"In Hawaiian thinking and Hawaiian culture, Pele is the foundation, the creation of land," said Pili'ani Kaewawa, who teaches traditional Hawaiian literature, chant and hula at the Hawaii Island campus of Kamehameha Schools.

"People know she exists," Kaawaloa said.

"And because we have these genuine stories and legends and chants that talk about who she is."

She has two forms, Kaawaloa explained, one that stays at the crater tending to her fire pit and another that goes "holoholo" or leisurely exploring, around Puna, a district on the slopes of the volcano.

That's exactly what is happening now with the lava fissures opening up in Puna's Leilani Estates and neighboring communities, while scientists worry that Kilauea's summit could have an explosive steam eruption that would hurt huge rocks and ash miles into the sky.

Legends of Pele

A popular legend tells the tale of a frail, old woman who asks for food from two girls cooking breadfruit. One girl said they didn't have food for strangers, but the younger girl shared the breadfruit. The woman told the younger girl that strange things would be happening on the mountainside and to tell her family to hang bits of cloth made from bark to stay safe.

The younger girl's grandmother said that woman was Pele and heeded the advice. A neighbor told them Pele is angry, and she's stirring her fire pit on Mauna Loa, according to "Hawaii Island Legends," edited by Mary Kawena Pukui.

Pele sent her lava to destroy those who made her angry. The lava stream broke in two and flowed on each side of the younger girl's home.

"When our myth writers observe nature and what's happening, it's easy to put feelings and emotions and romance into it," to make the stories interesting and stand the test of time while also incorporating morality lessons, Kanahele said.

To understand Pele on a deeper level, it's important to remember science underlies the tales, which were created to record scientific observations, she said.

One example, she said, is the story of Pele brawling with Poliahu, the goddess of snow. That's really an eruption at Mauna Kea, where there's snowfall, describing the fire and ice interacting, Kanahele said.

A lava flow is often described as "cleaning house," but Kanahele said that's a more modern, western metaphor. "Pele was flowing for millions of years," she said. "She wasn't cleaning house, she was creating land."



A portrait of volcano deity Pele by famed Hawaiian artist Herb Kawainui Kane is on display at the Jagger Museum and Hawaii Volcano Observatory in Hawaii's Volcanoes National Park in 2009.



An offering to Pele adorns the cliffs above the newest lava flow from Kilauea volcano as it enters the Pacific Ocean at dawn in 2004 in Volcano, Hawaii.

Four laws

Pele has four laws, Kanahele explained: 1. The lava will always flow in order to create new land. Lava will always migrate to new spots.

2. When there's evidence of volcanic activity — earthquakes, the smell of sulfur — the land belongs to Pele. "If she's in residence, then it's best for humans to not be there."

3. Once Pele moves on and the area is free from kapu, or prohibitions, then humans can go into that land.

4. Land is suitable for human use after land burned down has been reforested.

NATION

Trump drubbed for 'animals' comment at immigration talk

By JILL COLVIN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — While railing against California for its so-called sanctuary immigration policies, President Donald Trump referred to some people who cross the border illegally as “animals” — drawing a sharp rebuke from Democratic leaders for the harsh rhetoric.

Trump's remark at a meeting with local leaders came in response to a complaint about gang members.

“We have people coming into the country, or trying to come in — and we're stopping a lot of them,” Trump said during the immigration round table after a sheriff commented about gangs. “You wouldn't believe how bad these people are. These aren't people. These are animals.”

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., responded on

Twitter to the president, saying, “When all of our great-great-grandparents came to America they weren't ‘animals,’ and these people aren't either.”

Trump was joined at the Wednesday White House meeting by mayors, sheriffs and other local leaders from California who oppose the state's immigration policies and who applauded his administration's hard-line efforts.

“This is your Republican resistance right here against what they're doing in California,” said Assemblywoman Melissa Mendez, coopting a term used by Democrats opposed to Trump's presidency. She, like others, said the president and his policies were far more popular in the state than people realize.

They were criticizing legislation Gov. Jerry Brown signed into law last year that bars police from asking people about their immigration status or helping federal agents

with immigration enforcement. Jail officials can transfer inmates to federal immigration authorities if they have been convicted of one of about 800 crimes, mostly felonies, but not for minor offenses.

Brown insists the legislation, which took effect Jan. 1, doesn't prevent federal immigration officials from doing their jobs. But the Trump administration has sued to reverse it, calling the policies unconstitutional and dangerous. Some counties, including San Diego and Orange, have voted to support the lawsuit or have passed their own anti-sanctuary resolutions.

Republicans see backlash to the law as a potentially galvanizing issue during the midterm elections, especially with Trump's anti-immigrant base. And Trump has held numerous events in recent months during which he's drawn attention to California's policies.

During the session, Trump



EVAN VUCCI/AP

President Donald Trump hosted California officials Wednesday at the White House for a roundtable discussion on immigration policy.

thanked the officials, saying they had “bravely resisted California's deadly and unconstitutional sanctuary state laws.” He claimed those laws are forcing “the release of illegal immigrant criminals, drug dealers, gang members and violent predators into your communities” and providing “safe harbor to some of the most vicious and violent offenders on Earth.”

Brown responded on Twitter, writing that Trump “is lying on immigration, lying about crime and lying about the laws of CA.”

The Democratic governor added: “Flying in a dozen Republican politicians to flatter him and praise his reckless policies changes nothing. We, the citizens of the fifth largest economy in the world, are not impressed.”

President's Cohen reimbursement raises ethics issues

Associated Press

NEW YORK — President Donald Trump revealed in his financial disclosure Wednesday that he reimbursed personal attorney Michael Cohen as much as \$250,000 for unspecified “expenses,” with no mention of a \$130,000 payment to porn actress Stormy Daniels to keep quiet about a sexual tryst she said they had.

The head of the nation's ethics office questioned why Trump didn't include this in his previous year's sworn disclosure and passed along his concerns to federal prosecutors.

“I am providing both reports to you because you may find the disclosure relevant to any inquiry you may be pursuing,” David Apol, acting director of the Office of Government Ethics, wrote to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein.

Apol wrote that he considers Trump's payment to Cohen to be a repayment on a loan and that it was required to be included in Trump's June 2017 disclosure.

But Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani told Fox News Channel's Laura Ingraham that he didn't think the repayment “had to be disclosed at all because I think it was an expenditure that he reimbursed.”

He also said the president was “fully aware” of his decision to reveal the fact that Trump had reimbursed Cohen in a previous Fox News appearance and “endorsed the strategy.”

“I wouldn't do it without him,” Giuliani said on “The In-

graham Angle.” “He's the client, after all, and has tremendous judgment about things like this. And I think it — that the OGE, the Office of Government Ethics, basically agreed with us that it had been fully disclosed.”

“The fact is that the president disclosed everything that he could disclose. He can't disclose more than he knows. And we're very comfortable with it,” he added.

But ethics experts say that if that payment was knowingly and willfully left out, Trump could be in violation of federal ethics laws.

“This is a big deal and unprecedented. No president has been previously subject to any referral by (Office of Government Ethics) to DOJ as a result of having failed to report an item on their public financial disclosure report,” said Virginia Capra, a former ethics official in the Clinton and Obama White Houses who is now with the watchdog group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

How Trump dealt with the Daniels hush money in his disclosure has been closely watched, particularly after Giuliani gave interviews earlier this month saying the president had reimbursed Cohen in a series of payments after the campaign was over. Trump and Giuliani have clashed over what the president knew and when he knew it.

In a footnote in his tiny type on Page 45 of his 92-page disclosure, Trump said he reimbursed Cohen for “expenses” ranging from \$100,001 to \$250,000. The

Reported revenue

In all, Trump's array of assets — hotels, resorts, books, licensing deals and other business ventures — generated revenue last year of at least \$453 million. The report estimated the holdings are worth at least \$1.4 billion.

- Trump International Hotel in Washington, D.C. took in \$40 million.
- Doral golf course and resort in Miami took in \$75 million.
- Mara-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Fla., received \$25 million.
- Bedminster, N.J., golf club generated \$15 million.

The figures are before expenses and so give no indication of how much profit the president made off the properties.

— The Associated Press

report said the president did not have to disclose the payment but was doing so “in the interest of transparency.”

While the disclosure didn't specify the purpose of the payment, Cohen has said he paid \$130,000 to Daniels in the weeks before the 2016 presidential election to keep her from going public about her allegations that she had sex with the married Trump in 2006.

Daniels' lawyer, Michael Avenatti, tweeted, “Mr. Trump's disclosure today conclusively proves that the American people were deceived.”

The tweet continued: “This was NOT an accident and it was not isolated. Cover-ups should always matter.”

The Trump Organization referred questions about the disclosure to the president's lawyer, Sheri Dillon of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius. Dillon didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Giuliani: Trump eager to offer his side on Russia

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's attorney Rudy Giuliani says the president still wants to testify in the Russia probe, but says he is “pretty comfortable” that special counsel Robert Mueller's team could not subpoena him in the investigation.

Speaking on “Fox and Friends” Thursday morning, the former mayor of New York said Trump will only sit down with Mueller if “we feel there's a way to shorten this thing.” He added that Trump remains eager to offer his “side of the case.”

Giuliani has been urging Mueller's team to wrap up its investigation as the probe hits its one-year anniversary.

Giuliani's team has been weighing whether to allow Trump to sit for an interview with Mueller. He said the legal team is “pretty comfortable, in the circumstances of this case that they wouldn't be able to subpoena him personally,” adding that Mueller's team can require documents and testimony in

certain circumstances, but not in his own case.

While the Supreme Court has never definitively ruled on the subject, it appears that a sitting president could be forced to testify. In 1974, justices held unanimously that a president could be compelled to comply with a subpoena for tapes and documents.

If he were subpoenaed and did not want to testify, Trump could always invoke his constitutional right not to testify against himself and decline to answer questions. But that act would pose significant political risk.

So far, the special counsel's office has charged 19 people — including four Trump campaign advisers — and three Russian campaign aides. Trump's former national security adviser, Michael Flynn, and his deputy campaign chairman, Rick Gates, have pleaded guilty and are now cooperating with the probe. Trump has panned it as a “witch hunt” intended to discredit his presidency and insisted that Russia had nothing to do with his winning 2016 campaign.

At VMI graduation, Tillerson warns of US 'ethics and integrity' crisis

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson took a veiled shot at President Donald Trump on Wednesday, warning that a growing national crisis of ethics and integrity has put American democracy at risk.

In remarks to graduates of the Virginia Military Institute, Tillerson lamented assaults on facts that he said would lead to a loss of freedom if not countered. And he said that only societies able to pursue

the truth and challenge alternate realities can be truly free.

“When we as people, a free people, go wobbly on the truth, even on what may seem to be the most trivial of matters, we go wobbly on America,” Tillerson said. “If we do not as Americans confront the crisis of ethics and integrity in our society among our leaders in both public and private sector, and regrettably at times in the nonprofit sector, then American democracy as we know it is entering its twilight years.”



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NATION



NATI HARRIN/AP

Kara Eastman, who is running for Congress in Nebraska's 2nd District, is hugged by her campaign manager Ben Onikka, in Omaha, Neb., on Tuesday. She edged out Brad Ashford in the primary election.

Liberal wins in primaries cheer some Democrats, worry others

By THOMAS BEAUMONT
AND MARC LEVY
Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa.—Primary election season is still young, but the liberal wing of the Democratic Party is already celebrating.

Democratic primary voters have chosen decidedly liberal candidates in several closely watched congressional primary elections, a sign that the left is driving much of Democrats' enthusiasm and may be winning the tug of war with moderates over the direction of the party.

Primary voters' embrace of liberal candidates in Nebraska and Pennsylvania on Tuesday underscored the trend and demonstrated the risks.

In Omaha, Democrat Kara Eastman edged out veteran moderate Brad Ashford by casting herself as a progressive in Nebraska's lone urban district, supporting single-payer, government-run health insurance and a ban on assault weapons.

But some Democrats argue candidates like Eastman are pulling the party too far to the left for a district that, except for Ashford's lone term two years ago, has been held for more than 20 years by Republicans in the heart of a conservative state. Eastman, whose victory surprised top Democratic leaders, argues otherwise.

"The Democratic base was looking for an actual Democrat who represents their values," Eastman told The Associated Press. "For years we've been running conservative Democrats and seeing them lose."

In Pennsylvania, Scott Wallace, a wealthy donor to liberal causes, beat out Rachel Reddick, a former Republican and Navy veteran, in a three-way race in suburban Bucks County, north of Philadelphia. Lesser-known environmentalist Steve A. Bacher finished a distant

Reddick stressed her conser-

sion to the Democratic Party, while Wallace, a grandson of former Vice President Henry Wallace, stressed his long-standing loyalty to party ideals, including single-payer health care.

In Allentown, Pa., lawyer Susan Wild narrowly won in the Democratic primary in the state's swing-voting 7th Congressional District.

Wild, who supports universal health care and an assault weapons ban, beat out moderate John Morganelli, who holds more conservative views on abortion rights and immigration.

The results reflect voters' shifting thinking on ideas long considered too liberal to appeal to the middle. Promoting gun control, for instance, is not viewed as the deal breaker with moderates it might have been a decade ago, Democratic state Rep. Peter Schweyer, of Allentown, said.

"People are less afraid to be as vocal about it as they once were," said Schweyer, who backed Wild.

National liberal groups cheered Democratic Idaho gubernatorial candidate Paulette Jordan's win in Tuesday's primary. The 38-year-old state representative was endorsed by the liberal, anti-Trump group Indivisible.

Unlike the districts in Nebraska and Pennsylvania, Idaho is a Republican-heavy state where the GOP gubernatorial nominee, Brad Little, would be the heavy favorite to win in November.

The three House seats in Pennsylvania and Nebraska are seen as key to the roughly two dozen seats that Democrats must gain in November to claim a House majority.

Democrats are looking right at 25 districts where Republican Donald Trump fell short of Democrat Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election, like the two Pennsylvania districts.

Several of those are open seats because of the dozens of Republican members choosing to retire rather than seek re-election amid

headwinds for the party.

As GOP retirements have mounted, Democrats have begun looking to a roughly 100 more districts, including the Nebraska district, where Trump narrowly won, demonstrating the potential breadth of the battleground this fall.

While Ashford had sought public office as a Republican and later a Democrat for more than 30 years, Eastman's profile as the head of a nonprofit group helped her connect with some voters on Omaha's African-American-heavy north side, said Precious McKesson, the coalitions director for the Nebraska Democratic Party.

"You had someone who had already been there before in Ashford," McKesson said. "But then you had someone in Kara who is a social worker, who has worked on causes behind the scenes, someone we could relate to. I think that's what made more people come out for her."

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the national House campaign arm of the Democratic National Committee, had backed Ashford and dispatched national figures such as California Rep. Adam Schiff to Omaha to raise money for him.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, who raised \$16 million for House Democrats in the first quarter of 2018, had said as late as last week that she expected Ashford to win.

Some of Tuesday's results, at least in Nebraska, jolted House Democrats in Washington, who expressed surprise after huddling privately Wednesday.

Crystal Rhoades, Democratic Party chairwoman for Douglas County, Neb., said her party has assumed wrongly the way to win is by offering voters a conservative Democrat.

"There's been a fundamental misunderstanding of this district for a long time," she said. "The answer is turnout, turnout, turnout."

Election hack puts focus on paperless voting machines

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY
Associated Press

ATLANTA — As the midterm congressional primaries heat up amid fears of Russian hacking, an estimated 1 in 5 Americans will be casting their ballots on machines that do not produce a paper record of their votes.

That worries voting and cybersecurity experts, who say the lack of a hard copy makes it difficult to double-check the results for signs of manipulation.

"In the current system, after the election, if people worry it has been hacked, the best officials can do is say 'Trust us,'" said Alex Halderman, a voting machine expert who is director of the University of Michigan's Center for Computer Security and Society. Georgia, which holds its primary on Tuesday, and four other states — Delaware, Louisiana, New Jersey and South Carolina — exclusively use touchscreen machines that provide no paper records that allow voters to confirm their choices.

Such machines are also used in more than 300 counties in eight other states: Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Texas, according to Verified Voting, a nonprofit group focused on ensuring the accuracy of elections.

In all, about 20 percent of registered voters nationwide use machines that produce no paper record.

Many election officials in states and counties that rely on those machines say they support upgrading them but also contend they are accurate. In many jurisdictions, the multimillion-dollar cost is a hurdle.

The focus comes as states gear up for the first nationwide elections since Russian hackers targeted 21 states ahead of the 2016 presidential contest. U.S. intelligence agencies have said that there is no evidence any vote tallies were manipulated, but Russians and others are intent on interfering in American elections again.

Last week, the Senate Intelligence Committee issued a report that recommended replacing machines that don't produce a paper record of the vote.

Some states already have taken that step or are doing so.

Virginia last year banned paperless touchscreen machines two months before the state's gubernatorial election. This year, Kentucky ordered that all new machines produce a paper trail.

Congress has allocated \$380 million to help states with election security upgrades, but that is just a fraction of what would be needed to replace all paperless

machines.

Louisiana is soliciting bids to replace the state's nearly 10,000 such machines ahead of the 2020 election, though all the money has yet to be allocated. Funding also is an issue in Pennsylvania, where Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf has ordered that counties planning to replace their electronic voting systems buy machines that leave a paper trail.

"It's important because everybody needs to have confidence in the voting process," Wolf said. "And given what is alleged to have happened in 2016, I think there's some concern that maybe people aren't as

'Given what is alleged to have happened in 2016, I think there's some concern that maybe people aren't as confident as they should be.'

Gov. Tom Wolf
D-Pa.

before inserting it into another machine to record their votes.

In Georgia, the cost to switch to paper-based machines in the state's 159 counties ranges from \$25 million to more than \$100 million, depending on the technology adopted. The state is eligible to receive a little over \$10 million from the federal government.

Georgia Secretary of State Brian Kemp has said extensive security measures and cyber defense upgrades make the state's current system reliable. Those measures include outside security monitoring, regular checks for system vulnerabilities and a backup of voter data that is stored in a secure location.

Amanda Strudwick, 43, a nurse from Decatur, said she has to take election officials at their word.

"If somebody wants to screw it up, they can do it," she said at an early voting center in metro Atlanta. "That does not mean opting out of voting. Too many people have fought throughout history for my right to vote."

Concerns over Georgia's voting machines have been prominent in the race for the state's next election chief, with both Democratic and Republican candidates saying the equipment should be replaced.

NATION

911 technology struggles to modernize

BY LISA MARIE PANE
Associated Press

ROSWELL, Ga. — High school students hiding from the gunman in Parkland, Fla., were forced to whisper in calls to 911 for fear of tipping off their location. Others texted friends and family who then relayed information to emergency dispatchers over the phone.

A few months later, a woman in Michigan was able to send off short text messages to 911 dispatchers as her homicidal husband held their daughter hostage. She was able to convey enough information to help officers get to the scene and formulate a plan to stop the man without the family being harmed.

The two cases show how that in this era of active shooters, police shootings and global terrorism, a patchwork of technology around the country can make the experience of calling 911 vastly different depending on where you live. More cities have begun to accept text messages recently, but the system that Americans rely on during their most vulnerable moments still hinges largely on landline telephones, exposing a weak link that jeopardizes the ability of law enforcement to respond in an emergency.

"Most of the technology that's in the nation's 911 centers today is technology of last century. It's voice-centric communications," said Brian Pontes, chief executive officer of the National Emergency Number Association.

Nearly 80 percent of the nation's 911 calls come from cellphones. Yet the dispatchers on the other end are hampered by outdated technology that in most cases doesn't allow them to accept text messages, receive a live-streaming video or sometimes even easily detect where the caller is. It's a striking contrast at a time when text messaging is ubiquitous, video chats with friends and

family on the other side of the world are common, and Uber and Lyft drivers can pinpoint precise locations of riders.

The issue received new attention this week after the results of a police investigation in Cincinnati revealed numerous breakdowns in the response to a teenager who got trapped under the backseat of his minivan and died despite voice-dialing 911.

Experts worry that the nation isn't focused enough on improving the system and it is causing delays in getting emergency responders to the scene as fast as possible.

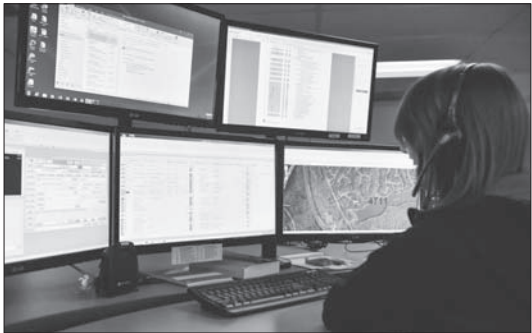
One obstacle is that there's no federal mandate or standards for call centers, with each one managed by state and local governments. That means there's a wide range of standards, equipment and training. And a recent report by the Federal Communications Commission found that a surcharge paid by phone customers that is supposed to be directed to 911 is diverted by some states to other needs, to the tune of about \$128 million.

Rep. Anna Eschew, a Democrat who represents California's Silicon Valley, has been on a mission to modernize call centers since seeing one up close during an earthquake when she was on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. Her worries only grew after the 9/11 attacks.

She's visited all the call centers in her district and, she said, "the smaller ones, especially rural areas, you walk in and it looks like 1952 because they're not funded the way they should be. They need to be upgraded."

In December, she submitted legislation that would direct federal funds to state and local governments to allow them to upgrade their systems to "Next Generation 911."

It was Feb. 16, 1968, when the very first 911 call was placed — a test call made by a state senator in Alabama — and the system was born. It is now embedded in Ameri-



LISA MARIE PANE/AP

A dispatcher in Roswell, Ga., works with multiple screens while handling a 911 call in March. This call center is one of the few in the U.S. that accepts text messages.

cans at a young age to dial those three digits at an emergency. An estimated 270 million such calls are made each year in the United States.

Until recent years, dispatch centers might receive a handful of calls at most during an emergency. A witness to a car accident, for example, would have to get to a landline to alert authorities. And each landline phone is tied to a specific address, giving 911 operators instant access to their location.

But now in emergencies — whether it's a routine traffic accident or a fast-moving crisis like a mass shooting — 911 operators get inundated with dozens of calls. If the person is using a cellphone to call from

inside a building, the location may not be immediately known.

Melissa Alterio, the director of the 911 communications center in Roswell, Ga., oversees a dispatch center that is among those accepting text messages.

Roswell, a suburb about 20 miles north of Atlanta, sees between 400 and 600 calls every day. If got its first text 911 message shortly after beginning to accept them this spring, someone worried about a possibly suicidal friend.

At some point soon, dispatchers might be able to view video streaming, just like anyone checking out Facebook. She worries about when that happens, knowing the emotional toll it could have on dispatchers.

Just 1 cousin pleads guilty to killing 4

Associated Press

DOYLESTOWN, Pa. — A day of reckoning for two cousins accused of brutally killing four young men on a farm last summer was upended Wednesday when one of them reneged on a plea deal, a stunning turn that had prosecutors seeking the death penalty and considering his cousin as a star witness at his trial.

Sean Kratz was accused of helping his cousin Cosmo DiNardo in a plot that involved luring the men to the family farm in suburban Philadelphia, ambushing and killing them, burning their bodies and crushing one with a backhoe before burying them. After the killings, prosecutors said, Kratz and DiNardo, both 21 years old, went for cheesesteaks.

Kratz rejected an offer that would have put him in prison for at least 59 years for the crimes.

"Unexpected outcome," said Kratz's lawyer, Craig Penglase.

DiNardo, who earlier Wednesday pleaded guilty to four counts of murder in exchange for a life sentence, could be forced to testify at Kratz's trial as part of his agreement to cooperate with prosecutors, District Attorney Matthew Weintraub said.



AP

Cosmo DiNardo pleaded guilty Wednesday to murder charges in the gruesome killings of four young men whose bodies were found buried on a suburban Philadelphia farm.

Kratz gave a videotaped confession during plea negotiations detailing his involvement, Weintraub said, and prosecutors will seek to use the recording as evidence at his trial.

Authorities saw DiNardo, a mentally disturbed son of wealthy parents, as the mastermind of the plot and charged him in all four deaths. Kratz was charged in three of the deaths but would have pleaded guilty to murder and conspiracy charges related to one victim, Dean Finocchiaro, who was 19.

Weintraub said the deal Kratz rejected was a final offer and won't be revisited unless the victims' families ask for that. The families were stunned by Kratz's decision.

Business acquaintance of Calif. blast victim arrested

Associated Press

ALISO VIEJO, Calif. — A business acquaintance of the woman killed in a Southern California office building explosion has been arrested on suspicion of possessing an unregistered destructive device, the FBI said Thursday.

The arrest of Stephen Beal, 59, an actor in several short films who neighbors said liked rockets, followed a search of his Long Beach residence by authorities, FBI spokeswoman Laura Emiller said in a statement.

Emiller stressed that Beal was not being held in connection with Tuesday's explosion. She said he was expected to appear in U.S. District Court in Santa Ana later Thursday and that no additional details would be available until a federal criminal complaint is issued.

Beal's Facebook page has many photos of him traveling with the blast victim, Ildiko Krajnyak, 48, a licensed cosmetologist who owned the day spa where the blast occurred. Their travel destinations included Mexico, Canada and Portugal. State documents show Beal and Krajnyak as officers in a skin care business called I&S Enterprises.

Authorities have declined to publicly say if they believed the victim was the target, but one official briefed on the investigation told The Associated Press the woman had been the intended recipient of an explosive

package. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the official was not authorized to disclose details about the investigation.

Remnants of a device were found inside the badly damaged spa where the powerful explosion shook the city of Aliso Viejo, about 50 miles south of Los Angeles. The blast tore a corner off the building that houses medical offices. Two patrons were seriously injured.

"We do not believe this was an accident," said Paul Delacourt, the assistant director in charge of the FBI's field office in Los Angeles. "Although the damage was extensive, there are some components that we have located at the scene of the explosion that are inconsistent with what one might expect to find at this business."

Stuart Davis, who lives a few doors down from Beal's home, said he often saw Beal and his adult son working on large rockets on their front lawn. The son told Davis that they built movie props, he said.

Investigators were working to determine a motive for Tuesday's explosion and figure out exactly how the device got to the spa, Delacourt said.

The blast is believed to have been caused by a package sent to the spa, two officials told the AP. The officials were briefed on the investigation but not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.



VIETNAM

AT
50

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NATION

Mom's bail set at \$495K in Calif. abuse case



ROBINSON KUNTZ, (FAIRFIELD, CALIF.) DAILY REPUBLIC/AP

Ina Rogers, right, with her attorney Barry K. Newman, listens Wednesday in Solano Superior Court in California, where she was charged with nine counts of felony child abuse. Bail was set at nearly \$500,000.

Associated Press

FAIRFIELD, Calif. — Prosecutors filed Wednesday that the 10 children rescued from a Northern California home were punched, kicked, strangled, shot with a BB gun and subjected to waterboarding by their father and their mother did nothing to stop it.

The details of the alleged abuse were included in a motion to increase the bail of Ina Rogers, 31, who was charged with nine counts of felony child abuse Wednesday in Solano Superior Court. Rogers did not enter a plea, but has previously denied allegations her children were harmed. She also faces 1 count of child neglect involving all 10 children.

"On a continuous basis the children were getting punched, strangled, bitten, shot with weapons such as crossbows and BB guns, hit with weapons such as sticks and bats, subjected to 'waterboarding' and having scalding water poured on them," Solano County Deputy

District Attorney Veronica Juarez wrote in the bail request.

Since announcing Monday that they had removed the children from the home where they say torture was carried out "for sadistic purposes," prosecutors have refused to discuss further details of the allegations against Rogers and her husband, Jonathan Allen, 29. He has pleaded not guilty to nine counts of felony child abuse and seven counts of felony torture. He is being held on \$5.2 million bail.

Records show the 10 children removed from the house March 31 are 6 months to 12 years old, but the documents do not specify which child suffered which injuries. The motion states that when Fairfield Police arrived at the two-story house in a suburb 46 miles northeast of San Francisco on March 31, they found the children "huddled together on the living room floor" in a home littered with feces and trash.

"The children appeared to be skittish and spoke with speech impediments," she wrote.

Juarez alleges Rogers assisted in the abuse and "dissuaded the children" from reporting their injuries.

On Wednesday, Judge William J. Pendergast set bail at \$495,000 for Rogers, saying she "may not be a danger to the public at large, but these charges make clear she is a danger to the children."

Solano County court records show that Allen was charged with four felonies in 2011, including corporal injury, assault with a firearm and criminal threats in a case involving his wife, identified by her initials, I.R. He pleaded no contest to corporal injury as part of a deal with prosecutors. He was sentenced to 180 days and three years of probation. Prosecutors dropped the other charges.

Rogers told reporters that she had one prior interaction with child welfare officials when her mother "had mentioned something" that prompted a home visit.

"Nothing was found, my kids were placed back with me," she said.

Man sues Burger King over '15 arrest

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER
Associated Press

BOSTON — Emory Ellis, a black homeless man in Boston, was hungry so he went to Burger King one morning in 2015. But instead of breakfast, Ellis got a ride to the police station and more than three months in jail after he was wrongfully accused of using counterfeit cash, he says.

Now Ellis is suing the fast food giant and franchisee for nearly \$1 million, saying he was discriminated against because of his appearance. The lawsuit comes on the heels of recent cases of police being called on black people that have sparked uproar and claims of racial profiling.

Ellis' attorney said the cashier likely would have questioned if the money was real if a white man in a suit handed him the same bill. Even if he did, the cashier probably would have apologized and said he couldn't accept the cash instead of calling police, attorney Justin Drechsler said.

"A person like me would've gotten an apology, but a person like Emory somehow finds his way in



STEVEN SEINE/AP

Emory Ellis, of Boston, is suing Burger King over an arrest in 2015 after he tried to buy breakfast at the fast-food restaurant using a \$10 bill that the cashier thought was fake.

handcuffs for trying to pay for his breakfast with real money," said Drechsler, who is white.

A Burger King Corp. spokesperson said the company does not tolerate discrimination "of any kind," but cannot comment on the specifics of the case. The company said the franchisee is responsible for employee training and handling legal matters about the location.

Two Guys Foods, Inc., the franchisee, didn't immediately return

a phone message on Wednesday. A number for the cashier, who's also named in the complaint, couldn't be found in public records and it wasn't immediately clear if he has a lawyer.

Ellis' lawsuit, which was first reported by digital legal news service Law360, was filed this week in Suffolk Superior Court. He's seeking \$950,000.

Ellis was arrested in November 2015 and charged with forgery of

a bank note. His arrest triggered a probation violation and he was held without bail until his final probation violation hearing, according to the lawsuit.

He wasn't released from jail until February 2016, when prosecutors dropped the forgery charge after the Secret Service concluded Ellis' bill was real, the lawsuit says.

Ellis, 37, never got his money back, the lawsuit says.

2017 saw big drop in births

Associated Press

NEW YORK — U.S. birth rates declined last year for women in their teens, 20s and — surprisingly — their 30s, leading to the fewest babies in 30 years, according to a government report released Thursday.

Experts said several factors may be combining to drive the declines, including shifting attitudes about motherhood and changing immigration patterns.

The provisional report, based on a review of more than 99 percent of the birth certificates filed nationwide, counted 3.853 million births last year. That's the lowest tally since 1987.

Births have been declining since 2014, but 2017 saw the steepest decline, a drop of about 92,000 less than the previous year.

That was surprising, because baby booms often parallel economic booms, and last year was a period of low unemployment and a growing economy.

But other factors are likely at play, experts said.

One may be shifting attitudes about motherhood among millennials, who are in their prime child-bearing years right now. They may be more inclined to put off child-bearing or have fewer children, researchers said.

Another may be changes in the immigrant population, who generate nearly a quarter of the babies born in the U.S. each year.

Aless year of IUDs, and other long-acting forms of contraception has been increasing.

Thousands of teachers march in NC for better funding

Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — Thousands of teachers filled the main street of North Carolina's capital Wednesday demanding better pay and more funding for public schools, hoping to achieve what other edu-

cators around the country accomplished by pressuring lawmakers for change.

City blocks turned red, the color of shirts worn by marchers chanting "We care! We vote!" An estimated 19,000 people joined the

march, according to the Downtown Raleigh Alliance, which based its number in part on aerial photos.

"I feel the current politicians in charge of the state are anti-public education," Raleigh high school teacher Bill Notarnicola said as

he prepared a time-lapse photo of the march. Previous strikes, walkouts and protests in West Virginia, Arizona, Kentucky, Colorado and Oklahoma led legislators in each state to improve pay, benefits or overall school funding.

WORLD

Congo worried as Ebola found in urban area

Associated Press

KINSHASA, Congo — Congo's latest Ebola outbreak has spread to a city of more than 1 million people, a worrying shift as the deadly virus risks traveling more easily in densely populated areas.

Two suspected cases of hemorrhagic fever were reported in the Wangata health zones that include Mbandaka, the capital of northwestern Equateur province. The city is about 93 miles from Bikoro, the rural area where the outbreak was announced last week, said Congo's Health Minister Oly Ilunga.

One sample proved positive for Ebola, he said. That brings to three the number of confirmed Ebola cases. A total of 44 cases have now been reported, including 23 deaths, according to the World Health Organization. The total includes 20 probable cases and 21 suspected ones.

"We are entering a new phase of the Ebola outbreak that is now affecting three health zones, including an urban health zone," Ilunga said, adding he was worried because Mbandaka is densely populated and at the crossroads of Equateur province.

The city of almost 1.2 million is on the Congo River, a crucial travel corridor in the vast country and upstream from the capital, Kinshasa, a city of about 10 million.

"Since the announcement of the alert in Mbandaka, our epidemiologists are working in the field with community relays to identify people who have been in contact with suspected cases," Ilunga said. WHO said it was deploying about 30 experts to conduct surveillance in the city.

Those exposed to the suspected Ebola cases will for the first time in Congo receive Ebola vaccinations, the health minister said. He said health experts already were tracing 500 contacts.

WHO has sent 4,000 doses of the experimental Ebola vaccine to Congo and said it will send thousands more in the coming days as needed.

"This is a concerning development but we now have better tools than ever before to combat Ebola," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, said of the new urban case.

The experimental vaccine has been shown to be highly effective against Ebola. It was tested in Guinea during the outbreak that killed more than 11,300 people in West Africa from 2014 to 2016. The vaccine is thought to be effective against the Zaire strain of Ebola found in Congo.

WHO has said it will use the "ring vaccination" method. It involves vaccinating contacts of cases and suspected cases, contacts of those contacts and health care and other front-line workers.

This is the ninth Ebola outbreak in Congo since 1976, when the deadly disease was first identified.

There is no specific treatment for Ebola, which is spread through the bodily fluids of people exhibiting symptoms or those who have died from the disease. Symptoms include fever, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle pain and at times internal and external bleeding.

Without preventive measures, the virus can spread quickly and is fatal in up to 90 percent of cases.



RAIF NOWAK, DPA/AP



MARIUS BECKER, DPA/AP

Cleanup starts after tornado hits Germany

Left: A tornado moves over the lower Rhine area Wednesday near Schwalmtal, western Germany, leaving a trail of destruction. Above: A caravan sits in a garden Thursday morning in Viersen, western Germany. The Daily Mail reports there have been six tornadoes in Germany this year.

Love manual has Argentine federation red-faced

Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — Argentina's Football Federation is trying to contain an embarrassing scandal after it handed out a manual that includes advice on how to seduce Russian women during the World Cup.

The manual was handed out to journalists, players and coaches during a free course about the Russian language and culture organized by the national federation.

It included a section under the title: "What to do to have a chance with a Russian girl."

The advice included lines like: "Make sure you're clean, smell good and dress well."

It also said that Russian women don't like to be seen as objects: "Because Russian women are beautiful many men only want to sleep with them...the advice is to treat the woman in front of you as if she is someone of value," it

Manual samples

- "Make sure you're clean, smell good and dress well."
- "Because Russian women are beautiful many men only want to sleep with them...the advice is to treat the woman in front of you as if she is someone of value."

says.

Another extract said "don't worry, there are many pretty women in Russia and not all are good for you. Be selective."

The AFA said Wednesday that the material was included by mistake by the teacher and that it does not reflect the values of the federation or its directives.

It also said that it has been removed. Local reports say that the material was taken from a blog about Russian women.

"The teacher responsible for the

course selected information to give his assistants," said Alejandro Taraborelli, who runs AFA's education department, in a statement.

"Regrettably, at the time it was printed, there was the inclusion by mistake of a text that was never part of the course."

Two journalists that attended the class said an assistant entered the classroom and removed the manual and returned it later without the section on seduction, but the content on Russian women had already been published.

Argentina has been at the forefront of a grass-roots movement to fight violence against women that has spread worldwide.

The manual's advice has triggered criticism from women's rights activists and others after it went viral on social media on Tuesday.

The World Cup is being played from June 14-July 15.

STARS AND STRIPES
salutes
The 69th Annual
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WORLD

Powerbrokers connect Mideast conflicts

By TAMER FAKAHANY
Associated Press

The modern Middle East has been plagued by ruinous wars: country versus country, civil wars with internecine and sectarian bloodletting, and numerous eruptions centered on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

But never in the last 70 years have they seemed as interconnected as now with Iran and Saudi Arabia vying for regional control, while Israel also seeks to maintain a military supremacy of its own.

Russia, the United States and Turkey make up the other power brokers in a region where not only wars but proxy battlefields within

ANALYSIS those wars are on a feverish and hostile footing.

The ongoing wars in Syria, Yemen, this week's mass killing of Palestinians by Israel in Gaza, Turkish-Kurdish hostilities, and the potential for an all-encompassing war sparked by an Iranian-Israeli conflagration in Syria or Lebanon — all have tentacles that reach across borders and back again.

Suggestion in recent years of a Sunni/Shiite schism across the Middle East and Persian Gulf appears much less a factor than the jockeying of the key actors with the most military, financial and diplomatic muscle who are trying to shape the region in their image or at least to the satisfaction of their national security and various leaders' hubris.

Here's a look at each of the main power players, whom they are aligned with, and what their ultimate goals are.

Israel

WHAT'S AT STAKE: Direct conflict with Iran has been simmering and briefly looked like it might burst into full-blown conflagration after Israel launched a blistering bombardment of Iranian positions in Syria, killing Iranian fighters after an alleged Iranian rocket barrage toward its positions on the annexed Golan Heights. The exchange followed several earlier suspected Israeli strikes on Iranian positions in Syria.

Israel sees Iran as its mortal enemy and "existential" threat. Conflict with Iran would likely drag in Tehran's ally, Hezbollah.

An Israeli-Hezbollah conflict could play out in southern Lebanon and northern Israel, with each side warning it will strike across the opponent's country.

Israel is bolstered by unprecedented support from U.S. President Donald Trump. Israel is determined to suffocate the Iran nuclear deal; Trump withdrew from the accord and days later sent his daughter and son-in-law to preside over the U.S. Embassy move to disputed Jerusalem, a move that angered the Arab and Muslim worlds. Bloodshed at the Gaza border may have revived global opprobrium against Israel for use of disproportionate live fire against unarmed protesters, killing dozens, but Trump's backing gives it reason to feel embold-



An elderly Palestinian man falls on the ground after being shot by Israeli troops during a deadly protest at the Gaza Strip's border with Israel, east of Khan Younis, on Monday. Behind the scenes, Israel is building relations with Persian Gulf nations also opposed to Iran.

ened. Behind the scenes, Israel is building relations with Persian Gulf nations also opposed to Iran.

WHAT IT WANTS: A much weakened Iran, the continuation of the Gaza blockade — which is also imposed by Egypt — with a ferociously controlled border, and no concessions to the Palestinians with regards to land for peace.

Iran

WHAT'S AT STAKE: The rapprochement with America under President Barack Obama is now ashes. Sanctions relief, running to hundreds of billions of dollars, is at risk, as Washington targets Tehran again, though a nuclear deal may be salvaged with European Union nations, Russia and China.

Iran has built up alliances to counter Israel and Saudi Arabia. In Syria, the presence of its troops and allied Shiite militias has been critical to President Bashar Assad's survival. In Yemen, it is allied to Shiite Houthi rebels battling Saudi-backed forces. Tehran strongly supports the Palestinian cause, though its ties with Hamas have weakened.

WHAT IT WANTS: Iran has pretty much accomplished a goal its officials have often trumpeted, building a corridor of power from Iran across Iraq, Syria and Lebanon to the Mediterranean. In all those countries, it funds and arms powerful Shiite militias and has enormous political influence. It seeks a continuation of the nuclear deal with the other global signatories, hoping to bolster its financial coffers. There has already been discontent in Iran that sanctions relief was not flowing to the people.

Russia

WHAT'S AT STAKE: President Vladimir Putin has ruthlessly filled the U.S. vacuum in Syria,

waging an air campaign that has left a trail of death in Aleppo and Ghouta among other locations. Moscow's support of Assad turned the tide of war in his favor when defeat seemed imminent several years ago. Russia is also allied to Iran. But it also hosted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for its Victory Day celebrations hours before Israel's attack on Iranian positions in Syria, raising speculation the two were quietly coordinating so that Israel kept well away from Moscow's forces and planes in Syria.

WHAT IT WANTS: Russia's regional goal is to sustain and build on the major foothold it now has in the Middle East, beyond Syria, notably where the U.S. might have once before.

U.S.

WHAT'S AT STAKE: "Traditionally we've tried to play a role of fireman in the Middle East. Now we're playing the role of

arsonist," says Ilan Goldenberg, a former State Department and Pentagon official who runs the Mideast program at the Center for a New American Security. That seems to have plenty of currency in the region now, though some would also argue the U.S. has long played an incendiary role in the region, from reinstating the shah in Iran in the 1950s up to and including its wars in Iraq to the present day.

That seems to have plenty of currency in the region now. The Palestinians have essentially cut off contacts and say the U.S. cannot be an honest broker. So Trump's promised "deal of the century" doesn't seem to be in the cards for now. Trump withdrew from the Iran deal. He has by his side hawks like national security adviser John Bolton, who has advocated for attacking Iran and regime change. Trump can't decide on Syria — to keep the U.S. presence or not? He doesn't seem intent on ruffling Putin



NARIMAN EL-MOFTY/AP

Forces backed by the Saudi-led coalition patrol Mocha, Yemen, in February. Majority-Sunni Riyadh is spending billions of dollars in Yemen to fight against Iranian-allied Shiite Houthi rebels.

over Syria unless chemical weapons rear their head again, which prompted U.S.-led airstrikes last month. The administration is very closely allied to Saudi Arabia and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and seems set to continue following Riyadh's lead on Yemen. Washington may get an unpleasant surprise if a heavily pro-Iran government emerges in Iraq after last week's elections.

WHAT IT WANTS: The administration is in complete synch with Israel and Saudi Arabia. Saber-rattling with Iran could escalate, and it shows no urgency in pushing for Israel-Palestinian negotiations.

Saudi Arabia

WHAT'S AT STAKE: Also emboldened by Trump, the Saudi crown prince is determined to make his mark. Riyadh is spending billions of dollars in the Yemen war, leading a Gulf Arab coalition against Iranian-allied Shiite Houthi rebels. Thousands of civilians have been killed by Saudi airstrikes and starvation in the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Prince Mohammed has made vague threats that the kingdom will build a nuclear bomb if Iran starts its program again.

Saudi Arabia sees Iran as the single greatest threat to the region and its competition for the dominant role it wants for itself. The kingdom is closely tied to Trump, who chose it as the destination for his first overseas trip as president, and it has been back-channeling with Israel. At the same time, it has lost influence in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon after placing bets on losing partners or failed gambits.

WHAT IT WANTS: Emancipation regionally of Iran and to be the dominant power in the region.

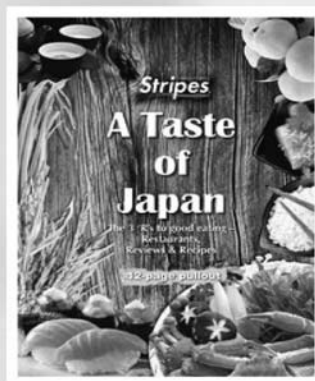
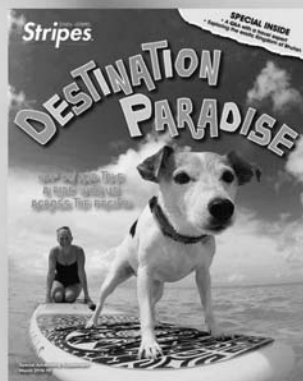
Turkey

WHAT'S AT STAKE: For President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, it's almost exclusively about the Kurds, who in an alliance with the U.S. helped defeat Islamic State in Syria and in the process captured a quarter of the country. This has infuriated Turkey to the point it launched a military campaign seizing a pocket of northern Syria, and it threatens to attack Kurds all the way to the Iraqi border. The presence of U.S. forces among the Kurds is perhaps the only thing that's held Turkey back this long. Ankara views Kurdish fighters in Syria as an extension of the Turkish Kurdish PKK, which it considers a terrorist group.

Turkey also gives vocal support to the Palestinians, while relations are at a nadir with Israel. Turkey has also offered to take in wounded Palestinians from Gaza for treatment.

WHAT IT WANTS: To break Kurdish strength and, above all, prevent a Kurdish autonomous mini-state in Syria along its border. It also wants some say in post-war Syria, where it has supported opposition fighters and Islamist groups opposed to Assad.

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP



ROGER WILLIAMS PARK ZOO/AP

Har-Lee, an 800-pound takin, escaped his enclosure Tuesday but was returned an hour later.

800-pound zoo animal escapes enclosure

RI PROVIDENCE — An 800-pound animal described as a “goat-antelope” that escaped its enclosure at a Rhode Island zoo was back in by the time the zoo opened for visitors.

The takin escaped Tuesday morning and was returned to its enclosure an hour later at the Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence.

A zoo spokeswoman said it started when a veterinary team approached the takin for a routine hoof procedure. The animal charged the heavy reinforced doors multiple times, finally breaking through onto zoo grounds.

The horned animal named Har-Lee was sedated and taken back to its enclosure.

One animal keeper and one veterinary intern were treated on the scene for minor injuries.

Police: Alligator used to threaten kidnapped man

CT BRIDGEPORT — Police in Connecticut arrested a man they said placed a 3-foot alligator on top of a man in an extortion attempt.

The Connecticut Post reported that Isaias Garcia, 30, of Garland, Texas, was held on \$250,000 bail after pleading not guilty to several charges including kidnapping and threatening.

Authorities said a 21-year-old man called his aunt April 6 to say he had been kidnapped and his abductor was demanding \$800.

The aunt contacted police who told her to get proof her nephew was OK. Police said she received a photograph of her nephew face down in a bathtub, the open-mouthed alligator on top of him.

Cookie dough spill causes sticky commute

NC WILMINGTON — A truck carrying cookie dough created a sticky situation when it lost some of its load on a North Carolina highway.

Pender County officials told news outlets the truck's cargo was sent onto U.S. Route 17 northeast of Wilmington near the New Haven-Pender county line. The spill happened shortly before noon Tuesday and delayed traffic into the evening rush hour.

Firefighters posted a photo on Facebook of the more than a dozen yellow containers on their sides. It is unclear where the truck came from or where it was going.

THE CENSUS

17

The number of guns, along with 45,000 rounds of ammunition, that were stolen from a house in Maine. Milbridge Police Chief Lewis Pinkham said the burglary occurred sometime between when the man left for the winter in November and last month, when he returned to discover evidence of a break-in. The stolen guns include nine rifles, including two black powder rifles, an AR-15 rifle and an M14 rifle. Authorities said eight pistols were also stolen. Pinkham said the homeowner is retired military and an avid hunter and collector.



ROGELIO V. SOLIS/AP

Remembering fallen policemen

A lawman's riderless horse passes review during the Mississippi Law Enforcement Memorial Candlelight Vigil by the Statewide Fallen Officers Memorial in Jackson, Miss., on Tuesday, National Police Week, which runs through Saturday, pays recognition to law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

2 police dogs chosen for hero awards

NY NEW YORK — Two police dogs, including one that made the ultimate sacrifice, have been named recipients of American Kennel Club hero awards.

The organization announced Tuesday that it has chosen K-9 Dexter of San Diego and the late K-9 Rony of Houston, both Belgian Malinois, for Paw of Courage awards.

Dexter was stabbed several times while answering a February 911 call. He has recovered from a broken rib and ruptured spleen and has returned to duty.

Rony suffered multiple leg fractures while chasing a car-theft suspect in the woods, also in February. He had to be euthanized.

College student wins job building Lego models

OH COLUMBUS — A college student won the job of master builder at a Lego center opening in central Ohio later this year.

University of Akron student Maxx Davidson, 22, beat more than 70 other contestants in a

Lego building competition in Columbus in early May.

Davidson will now help create life-size Lego models of notable Ohioans and other landmarks at the new Legoland Discovery Center in Columbus. It's set to open Sept. 21 at the Easton Town Center mall.

Buried treasure found in NYC backyard

NY NEW YORK — A couple of urban island-dwellers have found buried treasure in their backyard — but so far the pirates are nowhere in sight.

WCBS said a safe containing about \$52,000 worth of property — including diamonds, gold, jade and soaking wet cash — was uncovered on Staten Island.

Matthew and Maria Colonna Emanuel always thought the rusting hulk of metal jutting out beneath some trees was just a cable box. They were having some trees replaced when the mystery unfolded. The safe also held a paper with an address.

Matthew Emanuel knocked on their neighbor's door and asked if they'd ever been burglarized.

Bingo. The police report dates to 2011. They returned the safe's contents to their neighbors.

Woman brings brownies with laxatives to work

MI SALINE — Police said a 47-year-old Michigan woman has lost her job after police determined she put laxatives in brownies intended for a send-off for a departing co-worker.

The Ann Arbor News reported police responded May 3 to an engineering and manufacturing business in Saline after the company got a tip from an employee. Saline police Chief Jerrod Hart said the company confiscated the brownies before they could be eaten.

Hart said the Adrian woman initially denied putting laxatives in them, but admitted to baking in a cube of laxatives after being told investigators would test them. Her name wasn't released.

Cops: Man injured while trying to blow up bus

MA METHUEN — A man was injured by what police call a “fireball” while trying to blow up an old vehicle in Massachusetts.

MB 10 Boston reported the explosion happened when an unidentified man tried to blow

up an old bus on his property in Methuen.

Police say a “fireball” erupted from the vehicle. A bomb squad and hazmat team searched the area for the man, and found him with burns to his face and head. He was taken to an area hospital.

State police are investigating why the man tried to blow up the bus.

700-year-old oak tree knocks hole in house

MS D'IBERVILLE — A massive live oak tree that stood for seven centuries has split, sending around four tons of wood toppling onto a family home in Mississippi.

The Sun Herald reported no one at Barbara Taylor's home was injured, although the house itself now features a gaping hole. Taylor's friend James McKinley told the newspaper that local arborists verified the tree's age.

University of South Mississippi landscape superintendent Loren Erickson has told the newspaper that live oaks are prone to losing their heavy branches during rainy spells.

From wire reports

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Senate votes to restore net neutrality rules



WEEKEND



Sting &
Shaggy
Music, Page 36

THE DOMINO EFFECT



STRONG WOMEN AT HEART OF 'DEADPOOL 2'

Page 24

WEEKEND: GADGETS & CHARTS

GADGET WATCH

Spray your way with smart showerhead

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

A showerhead doesn't seem worthy of review in a tech column, but after I saw the American Standard Spectra eTouch 4-Function Shower Head (2.5 GPM) on display earlier this year at the Consumer Electronic Show, I had to get a demo unit to try at home.

First, the installation is simple, even for someone as plumbing challenged as myself.

A touch control on the edge of 7-inch Spectra eTouch showerhead allows you to switch between various spray patterns without turning the water off. And if that's not cool enough, you also get a waterproof remote that you can mount anywhere in the shower. This changes the water patterns with the touch of a finger.

The four spray patterns are: drench, jet, massage and sensitive spray. Each sprays out a significantly different pattern with different amounts of water pressure.

If a showerhead could be built with technology considered cool, hip and modern, this is it. Batteries for the remote are included (three CR2032 coin-shaped batteries) along with mounting tape. If you don't want to mount the remote, placing it on a shelf in the shower works fine.

Online: americanstandard-us.com; \$179, available in polished chrome, brushed nickel, legacy bronze and polished nickel

European audio software developer Sonarworks has announced **True-Fi technology**, an innovative and really amazing desktop app to remove unwanted sound coloration from headphones. This provides a crystal-clear experience, just the way the artist created it.

The software is supported by more than 130 popular headphone models, including Apple, Beats, Bose, Sennheiser, Skullcandy and V-Moda. The complete list is on the Sonarworks site, and the software is often updated to add compatible headphone manufacturers and models.

Setting it up is easy. According to Sonarworks, the software employs measurement-based compensation profiles to correct tonal discrepancies that are caused by the headphones' physical construction.

You can also personalize your listening preferences to suit your own hearing requirements.

After this, you'll hear sound as the artist intended. Since I've never been in a recording studio, I can't say this matches what you hear there,



AMERICAN STANDARD/TNS

The American Standard Spectra eTouch 4-Function Shower Head allows you to vary the spray pattern without turning the water off.

but I can say my audio (tested on Sennheiser headphones) was greatly enhanced and had a better sound clarity.

The software works with both Mac and PCs, and a free trial is available.

Online: sonarworks.com; \$79

The Case-Mate Power Pad wireless charger enables users to drop a smartphone into a standing dock without connecting any wires or connectors directly to their devices for charging.

It supports fast and safe charging for Qi-enabled wireless charging devices such as the Apple iPhone (7.5 W) and Samsung Galaxy (9 W).

Using the Power Pad is simple, assuming you have a Qi-enabled charging device. One option is standing charging, where you can view the LCD in portrait or landscape viewing in the tabletop ergonomic stand with grips on the bottom to keep it in place. Or you can remove the charging pad and lay the smartphone down flat.

Online: case-mate.com; \$59.99



Study suggests that Tinder users are surprisingly honest

By NICOLETTA LANESE
The Mercury News

With so many Americans now finding romance through online dating and mobile apps, you have to wonder — can you really trust someone you've met through a screen? Researchers at Stanford's Social Media Lab embarked on a quest to find out.

"I really don't trust anyone online," said Leon Pham, a dating app user and UC Santa Cruz student. "How do you trust someone you just met through a right swipe?"

Pham says he has embellished his own dating profile, choosing only his most adventurous photos, or told white lies as to when exactly he would arrive at a date. Generally, though, Pham has mostly encountered honest people on dating apps and thinks people are inclined to tell the truth — "for fear of being caught."

David Markowitz, the study's lead author, wanted to see how honest users are with each other.

"We know a lot about online dating profiles already — men overstate their height, women understate their weight, men tend to flatter but also overstate their occupation, women tend to overstate their looks," Markowitz said.

That's why he focused on the so-called "discovery" phase of online dating, when users begin exchanging information and emails.

It's an area of particular interest to Markowitz, who studies how deception affects language, analyzing how people lead others to believe the false statements they utter and what motivates them to stretch the truth in the first place. With the rising popularity of dating apps, he wondered how honest people are "on the app." Moving beyond the dating profile, he wanted to know how often people lie in their actual messages with potential dates.

Suppose you're on Tinder, swiping left and right to your heart's delight. You swipe right on a cutie with a passion for pizza, and lo and behold, it's a match. Now, you enter a high stakes game: the conversation between match

and in-person meeting. The next few messages are make or break, carefully calculated down to the last emoji.

"It's this period we call the 'discovery phase,'" Markowitz said. "It's a time when getting to know someone can really influence whether you're going to take the leap and meet the person."

So how often do people slip a few fibs into that critical conversation? Not as often as you might expect, it turns out, according to the study published recently in the *Journal of Communication*.

The researchers recruited 200 anonymous volunteers to turn over 3,000 of their "discovery phase" messages, including a percentage that migrated to standard text messaging. The study users who agreed were on apps such as Bumble, OkCupid, Grindr and MeetMe, but the vast majority were on Tinder. Participants were asked to rate each of their messages from 1, meaning "not deceptive at all," to 5, "extremely deceptive." They also were asked some background questions, including what motivated them to join the app and how much they trusted their match.

Two-thirds of the study participants didn't tell a single lie in their attempts to snag a date. Overall, only 7 percent of the thousands of messages were deceptive.

People who joined the app seeking social approval, entertainment or casual sex had higher rates of lying. This was expected as these users aren't looking for long-term relationships. It's easy to get away with lying to a person you only meet once. The more a participant lied to their matches, the more they thought their matches were lying, too. The opposite was also true. Prior studies have also shown that people tend to judge each other based on their own behavior, Markowitz said.

"Lying conflicts with our goals.

We want to meet someone, we want to find love, and it's possible that deception may undermine that," Markowitz said. "I think most people may suggest that people are lying all the time on mobile dating apps, but that's really not the case."

ON THE COVER: Zazie Beetz stars as the sorta-superhero Domino in "Deadpool 2."

Twentieth Century Fox

ITUNES MUSIC

The top 10 songs on iTunes for the week ending May 10:

1. "This Is America," Childish Gambino
2. "Beautiful Crazy," Luke Combs
3. "Whatever It Take," Imagine Dragons
4. "Meant to Be," Bebe Rexha & Florida Georgia Line
5. "Nice For What," Drake
6. "The Middle," Zedd, Maren Morris & Grey
7. "God's Plan," Drake
8. "Psycho" (feat. Ty Dolla \$ign), Post Malone
9. "No Tears Left to Cry," Ariana Grande
10. "In My Blood," Shawn Mendes

— Compiled by AP

SPOTIFY MUSIC

The top 10 songs on Spotify for the week ending May 15:

1. "This Is America," Childish Gambino
2. "Better Now," Post Malone
3. "One Kiss" (with Dua Lipa), Calvin Harris
4. "Nice For What," Drake
5. "No Tears Left to Cry," Ariana Grande
6. "God's Plan," Drake
7. "Psycho" (feat. Ty Dolla \$ign), Post Malone
8. "FRIENDS," Marshmello
9. "X," Nicky Jam
10. "I Like It," Cardi B

— Compiled by Stars and Stripes

ITUNES MOVIES

The top 10 movies on iTunes for the week ending May 13:

1. "Black Panther"
2. "Fifty Shades Freed"
3. "The Greatest Showman"
4. "Thor: Ragnarok"
5. "12 Strong"
6. "Game Night"
7. "Peter Rabbit"
8. "The Post"
9. "Iron Man"
10. "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle"

— Compiled by AP



BOOKS

The top 10 books on Apple's iBook Charts for the week ending May 13:

1. "The Fallen," David Baldacci
2. "The 17th Suspect," James Patterson
3. "The Next Girl," Carla Kovach
4. "Twisted Prey," John Sandford
5. "The Ruthless Gentleman," Louise Bay
6. "The Silent Wife," A. S. A. Harrison
7. "The Perfect Mother," Aimee Molloy
8. "The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck," Mark Manson
9. "The High Tide Club," Mary Kay Andrews
10. "Then She Was Gone," Lisa Jewell

— Compiled by AP

APPS

The top paid iPhone apps for the week ending May 13:

1. Facetune
2. Heads Up!
3. Minecraft
4. Plague Inc.
5. Schedule
6. PlantSnap Plant Identification
7. Bloons TD 5
8. Pocket Bulb
9. Geometry Dash
10. Papa's Freezeria To Go!

— Compiled by AP

WEEKEND

CHECK IT OUT

Events, entertainment and other ways to fill your free time

1



Puth, he did it again

Pop singer and songwriter Charlie Puth — one of those “discovered via viral video” artists — has been dropping hits from his second album for months. And now, it's here. “Voicenotes” is a must-have collection of summer-perfect tunes fashioned by a 26-year-old with a ton of talent. And Puth isn't into keeping his craft a mystery. He's open about the fact that he built his songs not in a studio, but with the help of music software Pro Tools. The album includes appearances by the likes of Boyz II Men and James Taylor. If you didn't love him before, these 13 tracks will just about force you to.

ABC

Charlie Puth, shown Dec. 31, gets everything right on his second album, “Voicenotes.”

• Album review on Page 37.

2

‘Pillars II’ returns to land of Eora

“Pillars of Eternity II: Deadfire” brings back a beloved gaming format, the classic computer RPG. The developers expand on the traditional setting of the original game, adding tropical scenery (including ship-to-ship combat!) to traditional fantasy-type gameplay. New characters have an explorable world packed with islands full of hidden quests, buried treasures and resources.



• Game review on Page 26.

3

‘Fall/Winter’ is coming for free

Books can feel like a bit of an investment, but it's a bummer waiting to check them out of a library for free. This week, Publishers Lunch released a pair of free e-compilations: “Buzz Books 2018: Fall/Winter,” and “Buzz Books 2018: Young Adult Fall/Winter.” The e-books contain excerpts of upcoming works by such authors as Barbara Kingsolver, Walter Mosley and dozens of others. This way, you can figure out in advance exactly which titles you can't wait to buy this fall.

• E-books available for download through amazon.com and bn.com.

4

‘Black Panther’ out on DVD

Even for those sick of superhero movies, this year's “Black Panther” was a breath of fresh air. The film, with a predominantly black cast and African setting, brought alive the fictional land of Wakanda and its wonders. The many who fell in love with Chadwick Boseman's clawed king didn't have long to wait for another sighting: the Black Panther and Wakanda played a significant part in the recently released “Avengers: Infinity War.” You can relive his story again and again now that the film is available on DVD.

• More new DVD releases on Page 39.

5

Backstreet Boys issue a new plea

Gen-X nostalgia is rampant in pop culture. Resurrected TV shows (“Roseanne,” “Will and Grace,” “Magnum, P.I.,” many others). Endless Stars Wars films. “Gremlins 3” and “Bad Boys 3” on the horizon. It's only natural that boy bands would follow suit. The Backstreet Boys released a new single this week, “Don't Go Breaking My Heart,” and the accompanying video includes the usual silhouetted men crouching and reaching pleadingly while bathed in soothing multicolored lights. The quintet resumes a Las Vegas residency in July.

• Watch at tinyurl.com/y8n5ee6t.

WEEKEND: MOVIES



'DEADPOOL 2'

POWERED BY WOMEN

Blind Al, Domino, Vanessa provide strength, comfort for flawed antihero

By FRANK LOVECE

Newsday

It's not easy being a friend to Wade Wilson, aka Deadpool, the costumed Marvel Comics mercenary with super-enhanced healing abilities and preternatural patter. And that's especially true for the women of the superhero sequel "Deadpool 2" who have to put up with his wisecracks, not-so-wise cracks, idiotic cracks, and cracks in walls and furniture where bullets hit and knives get lodged.

Fortunately, they give as good as they get. Whether it's Wade's love Vanessa ("Gotham" star Morena Baccarin), or his septuagenarian roommate, the aptly named Blind Al (screen and theater icon Leslie Uggams), or the sorta-superhero Domino (Zazie Beetz of "Atlanta"), "They can all, under the right circumstances, kick some serious ass," says Baccarin. "Including," she adds, "Blind Al."

"These women are all badass," echoes Uggams, 74, using a word she never uttered in her Emmy-nominated role in the miniseries "Roots" (1977) or her Tony-winning turn in the Broadway musical "Hallelujah, Baby!" (1967). Even Blind Al proves highly handicapped with an automatic pistol. "She may not be running around with them" as Deadpool and his X-Force team try to protect — and protect themselves from — a fire-throwing teen (Julian Dennison) targeted by a

time-traveling soldier named Cable (Josh Brolin), "but she can still kick some butt."

Yet for all that Pam Grier / Sarah Connor / "Atomic Blonde" machismo, there's also a surprisingly feminine energy to a movie spilling Grand Guignol buckets of blood, and with a sneer by Josh Brolin that could curdle whatever's left. "It's obviously very masculine in the sense of all the action stuff," Baccarin says. "But it's not dude humor" like in a "Jackass" movie. "It's everybody humor. It's funny, and this movie ultimately has a very sweet message to it. We talk a lot about family and where your heart belongs. So in that way, it's feminine and maternal."

True enough. When Deadpool literally is ripped in two in the film, he still finds a safe haven and a comfy couch with Blind Al as he waits for his self-regenerative powers to regrow his bottom half. And then his friends come over, including bar owner Weasel (T.J. Miller) and cabdriver Dopinder (Karan Soni).

But it's this unholy trilogy of women that serves as Deadpool's id, ego and superego. The adventures Domino goes toe-to-toe with his high-caliber carnage and non-sequitur ruminations (id). Vanessa reflects his sense of truest self (ego). And wise Blind Al provides a sounding board along with subtle and sometimes insulting encouragement that Wade heed his conscience and become a better person (superego). "That makes a lot of sense," muses Beetz when presented with this theory. "That

really does, absolutely." But what do the women get out of their respective relationships with Deadpool?

"I think he brings out in Vanessa a fierce protectiveness and a possibility for a future," Baccarin says. "And I think what they see in each other gives them hope in a very sort of grim world."

Blind Al, says Uggams, "had been a pretty good spy in her day," a part of her backstory not made explicit in the movie but which informed the actress' performance. "But then she became blind and that ended the spy work. So she kind of lives vicariously through Deadpool's adventures. I don't believe she has any family, so he is her family — he's like the son she never had."

As for Domino, Deadpool's the brother she never had. Beetz says she "did a bunch of research on who she was" in the comics, where the character is a decade older and more hard-bitten than her own devil-may-care Domino. "She had a very dark past. She was part of this government program where they did a bunch of testing on this group of children, and she was the only one who survived." Because of that extreme only-child syndrome, "I think Domino and Deadpool have a sibling sort of relationship," she says.

"For me, Deadpool is an incredibly flawed man who desperately seeks to do the right thing, except he rarely knows what the right thing is," says writer Fabian Nicieza who, with artist Rob Liefeld, created the character for Marvel Comics. "The Deadpool we get in the movie really is trying to grow up a little bit — trying to, in some strange way, be a functioning member of society. I've always described him as Bugs Bunny meets the Frankenstein monster: You need the Bugs Bunny aspect for the humor, but you also need the monster because the humor, when it's borne out of tragedy, only becomes deeper and stronger. And the tragedy allows you to do realistic drama and emotion — within the context of the fact," he says, "that he could lapse into Bugs Bunny at any moment!"

In "Deadpool 2," Blind Al (Leslie Uggams, top left) with Ryan Reynolds returns to keep Wade Wilson, aka Deadpool, in his place. Domino (Zazie Beetz, top right) joins Deadpool's new X-Force team as his sidekick, a mercenary who can manipulate luck. Morena Baccarin, right, returns as Vanessa, a human and Wade Wilson's fiancée.

Photos courtesy of 20th Century Fox/AP

INVISION/AP



WEEKEND: MOVIES

Insane as ever

Irreverent 'Deadpool 2' doesn't disappoint

By MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press

At a recent screening of "Deadpool 2," the audience didn't get up when the end credits came up, patiently sitting through the scrolling names of visual effects supervisors and fighting specialists. Real "Deadpool" fans know to stick around until the ushers toss them out.

That's because the filmmakers aren't content with containing their sprawling, anarchic and subversive hero in any conventional box. No, in the world of Deadpool, even the boring end credits are studded with jokes and teases.

So hold onto your seats as Ryan Reynolds once more dons the red suit and katana swords for this saucy, overstuffed and very entertaining sequel to the 2016 massive hit "Deadpool," which became the second-highest-grossing R-rated film domestically after "The Passion of the Christ." How do we know that? Deadpool happily brags about it in the new film, continuing his breaking-the-fourth-wall humor.

Just some of the other things that get derided this time are "Yentl," "Frozen," "Stranger Things," Wolverine, Jared Kushner, cultural appropriation, Brad Pitt, the New Wave band a-ho, "Basic Instinct," "Robocop," fanny packs, "Say Anything," dubstep, "Sharknado" and Reynolds himself, who mocks his disastrous earlier decision to play Green Lantern.

"Deadpool 2" is as gruesome and violent as the first, but perhaps the biggest victim is the very concept of superhero movies. Our anti-hero adores mocking the moral clarity, earnestness and predictable stunts of his distant cousins. And, as a Marvel

property, he especially delights in lampooning D.C. Comics. "So dark," Deadpool says to another superhero. "Are you sure you're not from the DC Universe?"

In this film, which reunites the original writing team of Rhett Reese and Paul Wernick, we begin by finding our unkillable mercenary in the same domestic bliss where we left him. But if "Deadpool" was an origin story, "Deadpool 2" is a quest tale, and our hero this time encounters the time-traveling soldier Cable (Josh Brolin), a motley crew of mutants he calls X-Force — "Isn't that a little derivative?" someone asks snarkily — and various superheroes and mutants, all set to a lively soundtrack that includes Air Supply, Peter Gabriel, "Annie" and an original song with filthy lyrics. If something can be oddly sweet while heads are being decapitated, it's this film.

Some favorites from the first film are back — some only briefly — such as housemate Leslie Uggams, girlfriend Morena Baccarin and cab driver Karan Soni. The new characters don't have time to make much of an impression, except for Zazie Beetz from "Atlanta" who has a great turn as Domino, a strong, sardonic superhero who relies on luck. (Someone please write her a spinoff film.)

Deadpool, of course, helps us along the film's convoluted plot with such post-modern cracks as "Big CGI fight coming up!" or the put-down, "That's just lazy writing" or, after a cool sequence, "Tell me they got that in slow motion." Director David Leitch replaces Tim Miller, but there's no noticeable change in tone or corrosion in the franchise's terrific



20TH CENTURY FOX/AP

Foul-mouthed mutant mercenary Deadpool, played by Ryan Reynolds, brings together a team of fellow mutant rogues to battle brutal, time-traveling mutant Cable (Josh Brolin) in "Deadpool 2."

special effects. If anything, the surprising success of the original has resulted in more money and more insane sequences, like a chase sequence with a truck convoy and a bizarre scene when Deadpool's legs regrow after he is cut in half, giving him baby limbs for a time.

Reynolds is once again at his arch and nihilist best here, while acting and jumping in so much facial prosthetics that it makes him look like he's inside melted cheese — or, as the first movie put it, an avocado that had relations with an older avocado.

To really appreciate "Deadpool 2," you have to have seen the original and probably every other Marvel superhero film, too. And be up on pop culture, from Cher to Broadway musicals. (It's a good thing there's no quiz at the end.) Speaking of ends, don't embarrass yourself by getting up to leave when it seems to be over. And get ready to happily sit through "Deadpool 3," too.

"Deadpool 2" is rated R for strong violence and language throughout, sexual references and brief drug material. Running time: 111 minutes.

'Book Club' is a delightful ensemble of iconic actresses

By KATIE WALSH
Tribune News Service

Fonda. Bergen. Keaton. Steenburgen. "Book Club." Sure, "Avengers: Infinity War" came out a few weeks ago, but this, now this is the greatest crossover event in history. Four of the most iconic actresses of the 20th century come together for a film in which their book club reads "Fifty Shades of Grey?" When can I line up?

This film is either in your wheelhouse or it's not, but for those looking forward to "Book Club," it delivers. For what it is — a breezy bit of Nancy Meyers-lite fantasy, featuring four beloved actresses talking about sex, baby — it's exceedingly enjoyable. But beyond its shiny surface and real-estate pornography, the film, directed by Bill Holderman and written by Holderman and Erin Simms, is a way to talk about the ways in which older people are desexualized in our culture. And it's rallying cry against that trend, which is in many ways a dehumanization.

That they get there through E.L. James' tortured pornographic prose is pretty silly, but at least the characters have some perspective on the questionable quality of the "50 Shades" trilogy, and we don't have to delve too deeply into the world of Anastasia Steele and Christian Grey's red room. The books simply serve as a stimuli for the women to explore their own sexuality in a world that often wants to deny that.

Each actress is given a role that hews closely to her own persona, so the performances aren't necessarily anything we haven't seen before. Fonda plays a wealthy, age-defying heiress, Vivian, fond of her independence and thigh-high boots, currently entertaining a younger lover from another



PARAMOUNT PICTURES/AP

From left: Diane Keaton, Candice Bergen, Jane Fonda and Mary Steenburgen star as lifelong friends whose reading circle tackles "Fifty Shades of Grey," triggering new romances and rekindling old flames, in "Book Club."

era, Arthur (Don Johnson). Diane Keaton plays the hilariously high-strung Diane, a recent widow and the mother of two wildly condescending adult daughters (Alicia Silverstone and Katie Aselton) pressuring her to move to Arizona to play grandma. Steenburgen is Carol, a chef and devoted wife to Bruce (Craig T. Nelson), trying to put some

spark back into their 30-year marriage.

But it's Candice Bergen who steals the whole film, playing a long-divorced, non-nonsense federal judge, Sharon, exploring online dating for the first time since learning of her ex-husband's young new fiancée. Everything Sharon does is wonderfully relatable, from her one-liners about professional ice cream eating to her Bumble profile pic, an accidental selfie complete with green face mask and upside-down glasses. Her dry wit is an essential grounding element in the film that could otherwise be far too flighty to take seriously. In fact, what we deserve is a Sharon stand-alone in the "Book Club" cinematic universe, just 90 minutes of her awkward dates and drinking white wine with her cat, Ginsberg.

Each subplot is rather perfunctory, but it's lovely to see a film where older women are winned, dined and courted by somewhat younger men. It may be fantasy, but that Hollywood would even dream up a bit of escapist fluff where Andy Garcia romances Diane Keaton is refreshing. The fact that her sexiest scene involves being covered from head to toe in a bathrobe and floppy hat is just so Keaton.

The ultimate message of "Book Club," beyond asserting the vitality, sexual appetite and humanity of older people, is everyone, of any age, who feels stagnant or stuck in their ways, has the opportunity, nay, the responsibility to shake it up and put themselves out there. Which is even a heavily sanitized version of the message of "50 Shades." "Book Club" just might be the best adaptation of that book series yet.

"Book Club" is rated PG-13 for sex-related material throughout, and for language. Running time: 104 minutes.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



SMOOTH SAILING

‘Pillars of Eternity II: Deadfire’ a welcome return to the land of Eora

BY MICHAEL S. DARNELL

Stars and Stripes

As the original ‘Pillars of Eternity’ came to a close, I was filled with a great sense of sadness. Many gamers experience this emotion after finishing a beloved game. However, with ‘Pillars,’ the emotion was amplified as I wasn’t sure we’d ever see its like again.

‘Pillars’ was the great mainstream return to a classic computer role-playing-game formula—one whose most wondrous elements were often ripped from its lifeless body to adorn lesser creations. While there were always new

RPGs, there were almost none offering the classic party-based, computer-centric role-playing experience.

Thankfully, ‘Pillars’ delivered on its Kickstarter promises, and its critical success helped usher in—alongside

games like ‘Shadowrun Returns’—the return to prominence of the ‘CRPG.’ Obsidian then followed the original ‘Pillars’ with the underrated ‘Tyranny.’

The developer now returns to the fantastical world of Eora, where powerful gods toy with the lives of mortals like so many wooden dolls. With ‘Pillars of Eternity II: Deadfire,’ the developers chose to expand on the more traditional setting of the first, infusing tropical scenery with traditional fantasy trappings.

‘Deadfire’ picks up almost immediately after the end of the first game. The Watcher, the victorious hero of the first game, returns (though you can also create your own personal protagonist from scratch). The Watcher rests in his or her castle after having exposed the true origins of the gods of Eora.

Suddenly, a giant statue rises from the

ground, breaking apart your castle and casting you out to sea. Seeking answers, the Watcher takes to the high seas, sailing to the Deadfire Archipelago.

There, the Watcher’s crew will encounter sunken cities, sun-soaked villages, fiery temples and more than a few fantastical tales on Japanese and Pacific Islander cultures. The party members the Watcher picks up along the way are equally eclectic.

There is Sorafen, the salty Orlan pirate, and Tekehu, the arrogant war-shaper who is all but worshipped in his native land. The biggest new addition to the cast is Xoti, a wide-eyed priestess that is on a mission to shepherd lost souls to the afterlife. Aloth, Eder and Pallegrina are the returning members of the original cast.

While interesting enough, none of the characters is as original or memorable as the first game’s Grieving Mother or Durance. As much as I enjoyed having Eder back tanking faces all day, every day, I can’t help but feel that the three returning adventurers should have been original characters.

Even still, none of the characters are strictly re-skinned fantasy tropes. Each is a wholly unique creation; each feels like they belong in the world that Obsidian created. There isn’t, for instance, a dwarf hanging around because all fantasy games must follow the Tolkien blueprint. The change of pace is extremely welcome. As is the expanded focus on exploring the world of Eora.

One of the knocks against the original ‘Pillars’ was its restrictive take on exploration. There were a few branching paths, but for the most part the next destination in the mission journal was the only real place to go.

‘Deadfire’ is more or less the exact opposite. Early on, the Watcher is granted an upgradable pirate ship and, as the game opens up, the entire world become explorable. A thick fog of war covers the world map, hiding islands packed full of hidden quests, buried treasures and much-needed resources.

The fog also conceals the many dangers of the Deadfire Archipelago. Storms can destroy your ship in the blink of an eye and pirates roam the high seas, ever searching for unwary adventurers to waylay. Of course, the Watcher isn’t helpless.

Ship-to-ship combat is a major new addition to ‘Deadfire.’ When roaming around the world map, pirates and other hostile forces will attempt to intercept the Watcher’s ship. If successful, ship-to-ship combat begins.

Naval battles are based on a series of choices selected from a text menu. Closing on the enemy ship will bring it in range of cannons; turning port or starboard will bring those cannons to bear. More nimble vessels take less time to turn, while heavier ships can take more punishment. Each round of combat has stages—you’ll take an action, then the enemy will do the same.

This can lead to an interesting bit of cat and mouse where you’re maneuvering, trying to get your ship in position to fire, while at the same time avoiding opening your ship’s sides up to a barrage of cannon fire.

While the presentation is a little dry—life-or-death naval battles reduced to text and a few drawings—the ship combat remains engaging throughout the ‘Deadfire’ experience.

As combat begins, you can also choose to ignore the ship combat, cloning and boarding the enemy vessel. This is a risky maneuver that will always lead to some damage to your ship

Overall grade: **A**

and crew. But it bypasses the text-based combat and leads to the more traditional CRPG combat that some players might find more engaging.

On land, that style of combat is the bread and butter of the gameplay. Battles play out in real time, with a heavy emphasis on pausing to issue commands to each member of the party.

Most of ‘Deadfire’s’ combat system was ported over from the original ‘Pillars,’ so experienced players know what to expect. One thing that seems to have changed from the first game is the difficulty level. The first ‘Pillars’ was quite difficult, and death came often.

‘Deadfire’s’ encounters are much more forgiving, and the plethora of side quests make over-leveling an almost certainty. More seasoned RPG fans probably want to consider bumping up the difficulty.

Those fans will be relieved to learn that the hardcore RPG elements from ‘Pillars’ have returned, and even expanded. Skill checks occur before most major actions, such as crossing a rope to persuading a dragon not to eat you. There are also various factions, each with their own conflicting agendas, making it impossible to please everybody. Make no mistake, ‘Deadfire’ is a classic RPG, with a hard emphasis on the ‘R.’

Obsidian had a challenging task ahead of them with ‘Deadfire,’ and it wasn’t one without risk. ‘Pillars’ was sold on the promise of nostalgia and bringing back to prominence a nearly forgotten genre.

While it was a success, players are notoriously finicky when it comes to games that play off nostalgia. That can be even more true when it comes to sequels—after all, what if fans decided one trip down memory lane was enough?

I think Obsidian understood that. They interjected enough new life into ‘Deadfire’ that even those wary of games that sell themselves on nostalgia will find plenty to love here. From the pirate trappings, to the tropical setting, to the expanded exploration—it all leads to a more well-rounded, much more flavorful experience than the first ‘Pillars.’

Platform: PC, with console versions planned for later this year.

Online: eternit.obsidian.net

darnell.michael@stripes.com



Ship combat is a major addition to the Pillars of Eternity series. In the early stages of ‘Deadfire,’ battles must be chosen carefully.

Obsidian Entertainment

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe



Summer starting point

Taunus town's old city, wooded trails make it perfect for outdoor excursions

By DAN STOUTAMIRE
Stars and Stripes

While it's become something of a bedroom community for Frankfurt in recent years, the town of Oberursel maintains its distinct identity derived from its location at the base of the Taunus mountains and its charming, winding and narrow alleyways and picturesque churches.

During the summer months, Oberursel serves as something of a home base for explorers, hikers and mountain bike enthusiasts — its Hohemark district is home to the Taunus tourist information bureau, a bicycle repair shop and several restaurants for hungry travelers as they take a break before pressing on to the Grosser Feldberg or Altkönig peaks, each well over 2,000 feet above sea level.

Hohemark also serves as a useful place to park your car before embarking on any number of trails which pass through the region, collectively called the "Muehlenwanderweg Oberursel-Frankfurt." The shade of the heavily-wooded trails is perfect for wandering in the warm German summer, and the elevation helps reduce the heat by a few degrees as well.

If you're more in the mood to see half-timbered homes and narrow medieval streets, the city's Altstadt should be more to your liking. Oberursel's old city hall — built in the 15th century — is a fine example of



Top: A typical street in Oberursel, Germany's old city, leading to the Hospital Church, seen in the center background.

Above: Statues at the Holocaust memorial in Oberursel represent Jewish citizens lost during World War II under the Nazi extermination program.

PHOTOS BY DAN STOUTAMIRE/Stars and Stripes

traditional German architecture. It sits on a wide-open plaza ringed by shops and restaurants with plenty of outdoor seating for people-watching and simply enjoying the atmosphere.

Located just 45 minutes from Wiesbaden and within range of an easy day trip from Kaiserslautern, Oberursel's combination of



A trail winds through the wooded Taunus mountains near Oberursel, Germany.

relaxed and active recreational activities means it should be on your list of places to explore this summer.

Stoutamire.dan@stripes.com
Twitter: @DKS_Stripes

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

To Hohemark: From Wiesbaden: Take the B455 south to A66 east, followed by the A5 north toward Hanover, followed by the A661 toward Oberursel/Bad Homburg. Continue on B455, taking the exit toward Schmitten/Oberursel-Hohemark. Paid parking is available nearby.

To Oberursel-Altstadt: Take the B455 south to the A66 east, then the A661 toward Oberursel-Nord. Parking is available near the old city at Holzweg 30, Oberursel 61440.

TIMES

Open 24 hours a day all year.

COSTS

Parking at Hohemark and Altstadt costs 0.50 euro (\$0.60) per hour or 5 euro (\$6) per day.

INFORMATION

Online: oberursel.de (In German only)

— Dan Stoutamire

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Lake Geneva acts as Switzerland's Riviera

Arching around most of the southern end of Switzerland's most southwest corner, Lake Geneva laps against the French border with a serene beauty. A collage of castles, museums, resort towns and vineyards, this region merits a few days of exploration — though you can enjoy a swift overview of its highlights even in just one day.

Last summer I took time to relax and enjoy the tranquil and elegant city of Lausanne (the area's best home base). With a characteristic old town, towering cathedral and delightful lakeside promenade, it has the energy and cultural sophistication of a larger city, but is home to only about 140,000 people.

The Romans founded Lausanne on the lakeshore — but with the fall of Rome and the rise of the barbarians, the first Lausanneans fled for the hills, establishing today's tangled old town a safe distance uphill from the lake. The steep city feels like a life-size game of Chutes and Ladders. Two-dimensional maps don't do justice to the city's bridges, overpasses, stairways, hills and valleys. Even the Metro trains and platforms are on an incline.

Wandering the pedestrianized Rue de Bourg in the old town, I could see the multi-tiered makeup of today's Switzerland on parade. Though the region's official language is French, the language situation, at least in the German and Italian areas, is more complex. Even the Lausanne correctly — “loh-zahn” — and don't confuse it with Luzern.)

One of Lausanne's highlights, the Collection de l'Art Brut, is like nothing else you'll see in Europe: a museum filled with art produced by untalented artists — many of them imprisoned or legally insane, and all of them as free-spirited as could be.

Down by the lake is another tourist district, Ouchy (pronounced “oo-shee”). It's the happy domain of commoners, office workers and roller skaters strutting their stuff — a fun zone with fountains, parks, promenades and restaurants. The Ouchy lakefront is also where you'll find the top-notch Olympic Museum, set in a beautiful lakeside park where the Olympic flame flickers between editions of the games. This is your chance to see Jesse Owens' spiked jumping shoes, Katrinka Witt's red skating dress, a basketball signed by the



Rick Steves

1992 American “Dream Team” and Cathy Freeman's running shoes.

The most picturesque way to see Lake Geneva is by a two-hour boat cruise from Lausanne to the region's best sight: the island-castle of Chateau de Chillon. Elegant French-style villas with pastel colors, frilly balconies and mansard roofs grace the lakeshore and instill an air of gentility. On my last visit, I sailed past the dreamy terraced banks of Lavaux vineyards and on toward Montreux — a relaxed resort famous for its jazz festival each July.

Though not heavy on sights, Montreux offers sublime views of misty Lake Geneva and the cut-glass peaks in the distance. For an easy side trip from Montreux, hop on the Chocolate Train. It stops at a chocolate factory and at the foot of Gruyeres, the ultra-touristy town that's justifiably famous for its cheese — which you can see being made in a cheese production house.



Dominic Arizona Bonuccelli

Find the dank prison and battle-scarred weapons at Chateau de Chillon before strolling the ramparts for a tingly view of Lake Geneva.

The French-speaking Swiss countryside to the north is worth exploring, especially if you're driving. Along with tasty chocolates and fragrant cheese, it's sprinkled with crystal-clear lakes and sleepy cows.

My favorite destination in the area, Chateau de Chillon, is at the edge of Lake Geneva, about 20 miles southeast of Lausanne. Because it's built on a rocky island, this medieval castle has a higgledy-piggledy shape that combines a stout fortress (on the land side) and a residence (on the lake side). Remarkably well-preserved, the chateau has never been damaged or destroyed — always inhabited, always maintained. Over the centuries it's been used as an armory, warehouse, prison, hospital and tourist attraction. The Ro-

manics loved this place: Rousseau, Lord Byron, Victor Hugo and Goethe were all inspired here, and even Dickens and Hemingway dropped by. Chillon is still Switzerland's best castle experience, with a dank prison, battle-scarred weapons, simple Swiss-style mobile furniture and 800-year-old toilets. Make like a sentry and patrol the ramparts, then (if the coast is clear) enjoy the tingly lake views.

There's plenty of gorgeous scenery in Switzerland, but Lake Geneva's laid-back vibe makes it the perfect place to just be on vacation.

Rick Steves (www.ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

TOP TRAVEL PICKS

A Taste of Paris tastes gourmets

Top chefs and rising stars of the culinary world are set to delight gourmets from the French capital and beyond at Taste of Paris, running through May 20 at the Grand Palais. The iconic glass-and-iron-domed structure along the Champs-Elysees will be the scene of dining, sipping and live entertainment in the form of cooking shows and meet-and-greets with the chefs in residence.

The heart of the festival consists of pop-up restaurants in which taster-size signature dishes are served by the participating chefs, a mix of Michelin-starred, trend-setting and up-and-coming talents.

Visitors can also shop at the stalls of some 100 artisanal food producers who take part in 45-minute, hands-on sessions at the Electrolux Chefs' Secrets Theatre. Sessions are free, but must be reserved on-site on a first-come, first-served basis. The Laurent-Perrier champagne bar is the place to pair the tasty bubbles with the perfect beverage.

Tickets to Taste of Paris provide access to time-limited sessions, including those from 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m. or 7 p.m.-11:30 p.m. May 19 and 20. Tickets cost 20 euros for adults and 15 euros for those ages 10-18 who purchased online; tickets at the door, should



Karen Bradbury

Read more about things to do in the Europe Traveler blog: stripes.com/blogs/europe-traveler

space remain, go for 25 euros. Once inside the venue, sampling the dishes entails additional cost; a pre-paid event credit card serves as the means of payment. Credits can be purchased both online in advance or on site. Most dishes are priced between 6 and 8 euros; signature dishes generally go for between 10 and 12 euros. Dishes are served in taster-sized portions. Online: paris.tastefestivals.com

Can't make it to Paris on short notice? Taste of Paris and other Taste Festivals make up part of an international network of events; European dates in 2018 include Taste of Amsterdam June 1-3; Taste of London June 13-17; Taste of Dublin June 14-17; Taste of Helsinki June 14-17; Taste of Moscow July 26-29 and Taste of Roma Sept. 20-23.

Street musicians swing in Ludwigsburg

Few things pair better with warm, dry weather than kicking back in the great outdoors while listening to a band. Throw in a castle as the backdrop, and the day not only sounds but looks beautiful, too.

From May 18-20, the Blue-hendes Barock garden in Ludwigsburg is the place to take in the sounds of folk, blues, pop, world and many other genres you'd struggle to pin down as part of the Internationale Strassenmusikfestival, or Street Music Fest. The 40 or so participating artists hail from five continents and perform on 12 stages scattered throughout the scenic green venue.

The artists selected to play here are not only entertaining the crowds but also competing against one another to be named the best entertainer, and the attendees have something to say about that. Upon entry, they receive cards allowing them to cast votes for their favorite artist.

The musicians play 6 p.m.-11 p.m. May 18 and 19 and from 2 p.m.-9 p.m. May 20. At the end of the day on May 20, the winner is announced, and he or she will give the final concert. Tickets cost 10 euros for adults and 6 euros for children. Bluehendes Barock is located at



Reiner Pfisterer

Dozens of musical artists will perform this weekend on 12 stages in the Bluehendes Barock garden in Ludwigsburg, Germany, for the Internationale Strassenmusikfestival, or Street Music Fest.

Moempelgardstrasse 28, 71640 Ludwigsburg. Online: strassenmusikfestival.de.

White wine, history in Soave, Italy

Soave is a small town in Italy's Veneto region some 15 miles east of Verona; it's also the name given to the dry white wine produced in the area. On May 19-20, the tasty product of the local grape is celebrated with Middle-Ages-style fanfare.

The “Festa Medioevale del Vino Bianco di Soave” is popu-

lated by such colorful characters as archers, horsemen, flag wavers, falconers and master craftsmen clad in era-appropriate costumes. Visitors may watch the re-enactors carrying out their pursuits and also get hands-on with a few activities themselves. On May 20, the day's festivities include the investiture of the Castellana, followed by the Palio delle Botti, a race in which participants push large wooden wine casks.

Festival hours are 10 a.m.-11 p.m. both days. Online: tinyurl.com/yc84qn3n.

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe



PHOTOS BY JOHN VANDIVER/Stars and Stripes

Falafel and hummus are the main offerings on the menu at Red — Enjoy Refugees Best Kitchen, a new restaurant on the north side of Stuttgart, Germany.

After Hours: Germany

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

For years, it was a cafe. Then it was a pasta bar. Now it's Red — Enjoy Refugees Best Kitchen.

In January, the restaurant near Killesberg Park in Stuttgart's north side opened for business with members of the local migrant community helping to staff the kitchen.

The idea behind the eatery, owned by a local restaurateur who is closely involved with the migrant community, is that integration works through work.

For customers, the result on the plate is a tasty twist to the more predictable dining options in the neighborhood.

The menu is simple. There are a range of sandwiches, wrapped in thin flatbread and filled with the flavors of the Levant. There's the Damascus wrap made of falafel, hummus, veggies and herbs. There are others named for Amman and Beirut. And in a gesture to its host city, there's the Stuttgart sandwich, a vegetarian offering that clearly has nothing to do with more meaty local culinary traditions.

On a recent visit, I went for the sampler plate, which included falafel, hummus, a couple of spoonfuls of Middle Eastern-style salads and baba ghanouj — which is basically a dip of pureed eggplant. It was served with a side of flatbread, and it all tasted great.

The plate cost 7.90 euros, or about \$9. The sandwiches cost 4.50 euros.

The atmosphere inside is cozy, and there also is

RED — ENJOY REFUGEES BEST KITCHEN

Address: Am Weissenhof 1/1, 70191 Stuttgart, Germany

Hours: Noon to 7 p.m. daily, closed Tuesdays

Dress: Casual

Prices: Everything is under \$10

Menu: On the chalkboard.

Information: No website or phone number

— John Vandiver

lots of outdoor seating.

So far, the restaurant, which is next door to Stuttgart's main art college, appears to be doing well, with a steady stream of customers filing through for lunches and dinner.

For daily commuters from Stuttgart's Robinson Barracks, Red is an easy stop off on the way home from the work day at Patch Barracks. The restaurant is just 100 yards from the turn at Am Kochenhof and Stresemann Strasse, where streams of Americans motor during barracks-to-barracks rush hour jaunts.

At Red, where the mission is integration, outside Americans might feel at home.

vandiver.john@stripes.com

Twitter: @john_vandiver



Red serves food from a kitchen staff that includes members of the local migrant community.

Reuben Pizza a quick, cheap grad party option

By SARA MOULTON
Associated Press

With the end of the school year looming, the proud parents of any number of soon-to-be-minted graduates are wondering how to pull off a celebratory party without spending a ton of time or money. Reuben Pizza is the answer. It's quick, easy to make, inexpensive and completely scrumptious.

Even better, it's not a typical pizza. Essentially, it's a Reuben sandwich that swaps out rye bread for pizza dough. All the other elements of the great deli favorite are present and accounted for: corned beef, Swiss cheese (in this case, Gruyere), sauerkraut and Russian dressing.

"Sounds great," you say. "But making pizza dough at home is way too complicated for me." Not so. You'll spend five minutes assembling the ingredients, three minutes mixing the dough in a food processor, an hour waiting and 45 minutes hands off, while the dough rises.

"Wait a minute," you object.

"What about rolling out the dough? I tried it once and no matter which way I rolled it, the thing shrank back in my direction." That can be a problem, but here's a solution: Instead of rolling out the dough on a counter sprinkled with flour, brush the counter with a little bit of oil. The oil glues down the dough, allowing you to roll it out quickly and efficiently, with very little shrinkage.

This recipe guides you through the making of four medium-sized pizzas rather than two large ones. The smaller ones are easier and quicker to make than the bigger ones. And don't worry about having to bake them in shifts; the first two pies will stay warm while the second two are baking.

As a fan of crispy crusts, I've been very particular about the amount of topping meant for these pizzas. I know it's tempting to pile on the toppings, but overdoing makes the finished product soggy. Still, don't be shy about pouring on a generous drizzle of the dressing as a finishing touch.

REUBEN PIZZA

Start to finish: 2 hours (1 hour if using store-bought dough)

Servings: 6 to 8

Ingredients:

Speedy Pizza Dough (see below) or 14 ounces prepared pizza dough

Olive oil for rolling out the dough

2/3 cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons ketchup
1 tablespoon fresh lime or lemon juice

2 teaspoons hot sauce

Kosher salt

3 ounces coarsely grated Gruyere cheese (about 3/4 cup)

1 cup sauerkraut, rinsed in a strainer and pressed to remove excess moisture

8 ounces thinly sliced corned beef, cut crosswise into 1/4-inch thick strips

1/2 cup thinly sliced dill pickle

Directions:

Prepare the Basic Pizza Dough. While it's rising, place a rack in the bottom third of the oven, preheat the oven to 500 F. Line two baking sheets with parchment.

In a bowl whisk together the mayonnaise, ketchup, lime juice, hot sauce and salt to taste; set aside.

Divide the dough into 4 balls, working with 2 balls, roll out each ball on a lightly oiled surface into a round 8 inches wide and 1/8-inch thick. Transfer the rounds to one of the baking sheets.

Sprinkle 1/4 of the cheese evenly onto each round, spreading it to 1/4-inch of the edge and top with 1/4 of the sauerkraut, followed by 1/4 of the corned beef and pickle slices.

Bake the pizzas on the bottom rack of the oven for 7 to 8 minutes until the crust is golden and crisp on the bottom. While the



SARA MOULTON/AP

first two pizzas are baking, roll out and top the second two pizzas. Remove the first two from the oven and cover loosely to keep the pizzas warm until the second two are baked. Drizzle the slices with some of the mayonnaise dressing.

Speedy Pizza Dough

2 to 2 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour for the dough

One 1/4-ounce envelope quick-rising yeast

1 teaspoon sugar

1 teaspoon table salt

3/4 cup very warm water (120 degrees F to 130 degrees F)

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil plus extra for rolling dough

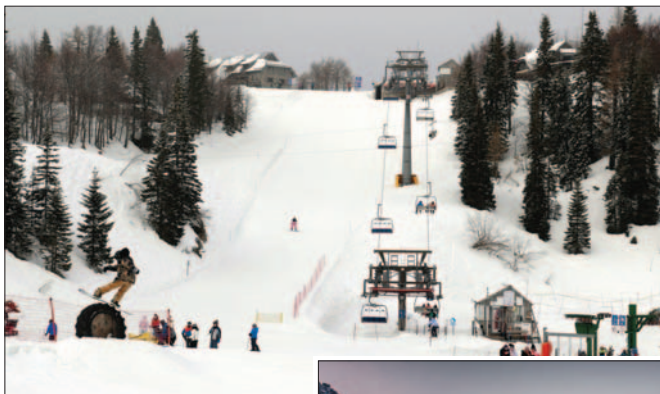
Directions:

In the bowl of a food processor fitted with the chopping blade, pulse 1 3/4 cups flour, the yeast, sugar and salt until the mixture is combined. Add the water and 1 tablespoon of the oil. Process the mixture until it forms a ball, adding more flour, as needed, to make a soft, slightly sticky dough.

Shape the dough into a ball and place it in an oiled medium bowl. Turn the dough to make sure all sides are very lightly coated with oil. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and set it aside in a warm place until the dough is double in size, 40 to 45 minutes.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe



One line I hear frequently, and which guidebooks like to boast about, is that [Slovenia] is so compact, with such a diversity of terrain, that you can ski in the morning and swim in the ocean in the afternoon.

A ski & a swim in Slovenia

By NOAH CHARNEY

Special to The Washington Post

Living in Slovenia, you often hear about the benefits of the wonderfully compact yet diverse terrain of the country. Stretching over a territory about the size of New Jersey, it runs the gamut of landscapes.

Consider the vast underground limestone cave systems, just a short drive from the flatlands of the Pannonian Plain, populated by storks and gypsies. The dark, fairy-tale forests of the southern region, dotted with castles and small churches, are mere minutes from the 30 miles of Adriatic coastline that stretches far south into Dalmatia. Yet this is just an hour or so from the northern mountainous region, fringed by two ranges of the Alps, looming on the horizon, capped by snow deep into spring. As an American expat happily living in Slovenia for many years, I love exploring my adopted country and looking, more deeply than perhaps even locals do, into what makes it such a wonderful place to visit and reside. One line I hear frequently, and which guidebooks like to boast about, is that the country is so compact, with such a diversity of terrain, that you can ski in the morning and swim in the ocean in the afternoon.

Logistically, in terms of transport time, I recognize that this is easily doable. To get from the town that I now call home — Kamnik, which boasts three castles and stands at the foot of the Kamnik-Savinja range of the Alps — to the coastline takes just about 90 minutes. But I don't know anybody who has actually tried it.

Could I actually ski in the morning and swim in the afternoon? Beyond the idea that this might make for a very warm morning of skiing and an extremely cold afternoon of swimming, there was the question of whether any ski resorts stay open long enough into the spring (or open early enough in the fall) to make swimming feasible without wearing a dry suit. The most important question was: Even if it is logistically feasible, would it be any fun?

Only one way to find out. One morning in April, I decide to give it a go.

A quick look at a map reveals that covering distances is the least of my worries. Kravace is the nearest resort to Kamnik — only a 20-minute drive away — and is therefore my go-to local ski site. The problem is getting to the top of a mountain to ski down it. Most of the ski resorts close at the end of the season, in late March or early April. Kravace, tucked in a valley, is no exception.

Instead, I'll have to go to Vogel, which is about 30 minutes farther away from the coast and the highway. Vogel is the highest ski resort in the country and keeps snow the longest, so that's my best choice to balance a functional gondola and snow-thick trails with a quick route down to the coast and an Adriatic Sea that has as much time as possible to warm up.

At top: Vogel Ski Resort is the highest ski resort in Slovenia. Above: An early-morning view of Slovenia's Lake Bohinj and the mountains rising above it.



PHOTOS BY EZAV MINGOLE/Special to The Washington Post

utes farther away from the coast and the highway. Vogel is the highest ski resort in the country and keeps snow the longest, so that's my best choice to balance a functional gondola and snow-thick trails with a quick route down to the coast and an Adriatic Sea that has as much time as possible to warm up.

To hit the slopes early, I spend the night in a tiny village just a few miles from Lake Bohinj and a few more from the Vogel ski resort. Artpartment is a rental on the top floor of a family home, converted into a wood-clad oasis by young master craftsman Izak Mrgole, whose parents, Leonida and Albert, are famous psychologists in Slovenia. In the attached kitchen, I prepare a traditional breakfast of unpasteurized yogurt, home-baked bread with local honey, apples and "mountain" tea (a mixture of wild alpine herbs), as well as an enormous mug of Turkish coffee. I'm off at around 8 a.m. to be on an early gondola up to Vogel. The drive takes just 10 minutes, winding through spectacular scenery that recalls the climax of "The Sound

of Music," which was filmed on a distant section of the same mountain range.

Vogel is ideal for me — a lousy but enthusiastic skier. It is full of long trails of mid-level difficulty, including one that is open only weather permitting, but which runs 7 full kilometers, sweeping all the way down the mountain in a single beautiful run that is skiing at its most delightful and least fussy, in terms of lifts.

Because the distances are short, I can take in a good two hours of skiing before I need to think about setting off. And because it is a weekday late in the season, there are almost no other skiers on the slope.

After that, I'm off to the coast, and since the highway takes me right past the capital, Ljubljana, I have time to stop off for lunch. I could opt for a quick meal and grab some cevapcici — the favorite fast food of the Balkans, a cross between a meatball and a sausage eaten with fluffy, warm pita bread called *lepinje* and a butter-cheese hybrid called

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

KNOW & GO

WHERE TO STAY

Artpartment

Zlan 4, Bohinj; 011-386-4-032-19-85; bohinj-accommodation.eu
Rents for around \$85 a night.

WHERE TO EAT

JB

Miklosiceva 19, Ljubljana; 011-386-1-430-70-70; jb-slo.com/en
Rated the 10th best restaurant in Europe by the Daily Meal.

WHAT TO DO

Vogel Ski Resort

Ukanc 6, Bohinjsko Jezero; 011-386-4-572-97-12; vogel.si/winter

A half-day ski pass costs about \$33.

Krvavec Ski Resort

Cerklje na Gorenjskem, 011-386-4-252-59-11, rtc-krvavec.si/en

A 2-hour ski pass costs about \$28.

INFORMATION

slovenia.si/visit

FROM PAGE 30

kajmak. But with a country this compact, why rush? Instead I stop for a proper meal at JB, which is possibly the best deal among San Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants, with a five-course prix fixe for about \$50.

After lunch, while driving the smooth stretch of highway to the seaside town of Koper, I begin to get nervous about the impending swim. Adrenaline is certainly not my middle name, and if a swimming pool isn't bathtub warm, I'm unlikely to opt for a dip. I recall the advice from Urban Praetorin, a running coach and ski instructor who leads sporty tourists on combination ski-run-swim holidays as long as the slopes stay open. He makes a point of swimming at least once a month, including during the winter, and in February he took a dip in the ocean when it was 40 degrees. This time of year, it's a balmy 55 degrees, he assured me, so it'll be a piece of cake.

He does advise me to walk actively before entering cold water, then enter it slowly and calmly, "convincing my prefrontal cortex that all is well." Easier said than done. I'd been planning a quick cannonball, followed by screaming and running out to shore, so this is a rather different approach.

Once an import city as the capital of the Istrian Peninsula, Koper is an endearing maze of narrow streets, with surprising bits of architecture, fountains and palaces, such as the Praetorian's Palace, with its fishtail-shaped ramparts. It also boasts an impressive cathedral housing a worth-a-journey painting by the Renaissance Venetian master, Vittore Carpaccio.

With a keen desire to get the swim behind me, I head straight to the piers at the edge of town. It is many degrees warmer here than it was in Ljubljana, and I'm struck by how few miles I've traveled to go from wearing my ski pants and jacket atop Vogel to the 60-degree air of Ljubljana to the 72 degrees of Koper. Slovenia truly is a concentrate of terrains and climate.

The sea spreads out before me, but I notice, with some trepidation, that there is absolutely no one swimming. Hmm. All the same, I strip down to the bathing suit that I have been strategically wearing all day under my ski pants. My wife awaits, rolling her eyes, with a thick bathrobe and a hip flask of my grandother-in-law's village-prize-winning homemade schnapps.

I still feel like a cannonball would be the best approach, but I take Urban's advice, jump around a bit to warm up, then breathe slowly, have a chat with my prefrontal cortex and step into the sea. It is cold. Really, uncomfortably cold. I manage to inch my way waist deep, count to three and then ... off I sprint to my wife and the bathrobe and, especially, the schnapps.

My ultimate Slovenian day trip proved a success. I was able to comfortably ski and (sort of) swim on the coast, all in one day, and without even feeling rushed. I have proved the oft-spoken, little-undertaken cliché that Slovenia's miniature size but grand variety allows you to do it all.

But I wouldn't recommend it. In the future, I'll keep my skiing and swimming holidays apart.

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GERMANY



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WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Pacific

After Hours: Japan

BY JAMES BOLINGER
Stars and Stripes

As an American living in Japan, it can sometimes be difficult to find a restaurant that reminds me of home. However, there is one dish offered nearly everywhere around the world that can almost always cure culinary homesickness: pizza.

Luckily for those stationed at Sasebo Naval Station, there's Pinoccio — a brick-oven pizza joint just a 20-minute walk from the installation boasting a beautiful view from a balcony overlooking the ocean. The downtown Sasebo location inside the 5th Avenue mall is the restaurant's second branch, capitalizing off the popularity of the original Pinoccio at Huis Ten Bosch, a Dutch-themed amusement park located several miles south on Hario Island.

While I don't know the story behind the restaurant's name, Pinoccio offers an English menu, a solid wine selection and (most importantly) excellent pizza.

I visited Pinoccio in the early evening, so there was not much of a crowd. However, even on a slower evening, Pinoccio has a classy, big-city restaurant feel. The waitstaff is well-dressed, and the restaurant's wine selection, much of which is sold by the bottle, rivals many upscale Italian joints in the States.

The restaurant also features an open kitchen allowing diners to watch as their pizza is prepared, which children would definitely enjoy.

If the weather is not good enough to enjoy the restaurant's balcony seating, the walls feature tall windows and provide a great view of the ocean for those trapped indoors.

For diners with dietary restrictions, Pinoccio's menu features pictures identifying the ingredients of each dish, including the type of meat, as well as common allergens such as dairy, eggs and wheat.

Pinoccio's pizzas range in price from 1,000 (about \$9) to 1,600 yen (about \$14). At the behest of some of vegetarian and vegan friends who have asked for reviews of some veggie-friendly restaurants, I ordered the Marinara pizza, which contains roasted eggplant, black olives and artichokes.



Maruolina, a chef at Pinoccio in Sasebo, gets ready to place a customer's pizza into the oven. The restaurant features an open kitchen, allowing diners to watch as their pizza is prepared.

The pizza was perfect. I'd never tried eggplant roasted in a brick oven before — and it is now one of my favorite things to eat. If I had one complaint, it was that there was not enough of the eggplant on my pie. This vegetarian pizza was easily a one-person meal, even without any heavy cheese or meat toppings.

For those who prefer a more traditional pizza, the diners next to me ordered a pepperoni and cheese pie that both looked and smelled amazing — so you are in luck.

Provided with your pizza order is a condiment resembling pepperoncini olive oil. It is red, spicy and adds a kick to every slice of pie. I used it judiciously.

After my pizza, I opted for dessert and decided on something called a "popover" — a flaky pastry sprinkled with powdered sugar and filled with vanilla ice cream, all surrounded by fresh fruit and sitting atop a bed of chocolate syrup. The popover tasted as good as it looked. If I wasn't on a budget, it would have been worth ordering another.

If you are not in the mood for pizza, Pinoccio also offers pasta dishes, most featuring seafood, ranging in price from 1,000 to 2,600 yen. The dessert menu tops out at 800 yen, and a cup of coffee or espresso can be added to any dessert order for an additional 100 yen. Hungrier diners might want to take advantage of the restaurant's weekday lunch buffet (1,680 yen for adults), which offers a set all-you-can-eat menu.

Bolinger.james@stripes.com
Twitter: @bolingerj2004

PINOCCIO

Location: 3-1 Shinminato-machi, Sasebo-shi, Nagasaki. Located on the second floor of Sasebo 5th Avenue mall, one minute on foot from the Minato exit of Sasebo station.

Hours: Open daily from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; last order for food is 9 p.m.

Prices: Pizzas range from 1,000 yen (about \$9) to 1,600 yen (about \$16), with addi-

tional toppings available for 100 yen each. Pasta dishes, offered in both regular and large sizes, range from 1,000 to 2,600 yen. Appetizers, including salads (600 yen) and charcuterie plates (800 yen) are also available. Soft drinks (300 yen) and a variety of alcoholic beverages (400 yen and up) can be added to any meal.

Dress: Casual

— James Bolinger



PHOTOS BY JAMES BOLINGER/Stars and Stripes

Pinoccio's Marinara Pizza — which contains roasted eggplant, black olives and artichokes — is a good option for vegan and vegetarian diners. The restaurant's English menu features pictures identifying the ingredients of each dish, including the type of meat, as well as common allergens such as dairy, eggs and wheat.

Below: The popover contains flaky pastry, vanilla ice cream and fruit.



Pinoccio's wine selection rivals that of many upscale stateside Italian restaurants.



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STARS AND STRIPES



WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Pacific



A temple near the Seibu Dome is well worth leaving the bicycle trails to check out.

ALLEN ONSTOTT/Stars and Stripes



Once light rail tunnels for transporting building materials to a dam, these tunnels now add an exciting change of pace to bicycling trails near Yokota Air Base.

ALLEN ONSTOTT/Stars and Stripes



Carved dragons, which become giant tanks to forced perspective, accessorize staircases at the Yamaguchi Kannon temple in Kamiyaguchi.

LEON COOK/Stars and Stripes

Path around Lake Tama offers pleasant sights

By LEON COOK
Stars and Stripes

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

From Yokota Air Base's east gate, follow Route 55 north past Aeon Mall. You can find the trail as the road climbs up the hills.

COSTS

Free. Public parking available in the area, but prices vary by lot.

FOOD

Dining can be found in the more populated areas alongside the trail.

— Leon Cook

If you're looking for a place to pedal or jog to your heart's content, a place free of traffic lights and mobs of pedestrians, with more excitement than Tama River's flat trail, a bike path near Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo might be just that place.

The journey was the destination on a cool spring day when I scaled the hills of Saitama's "Tamako-jitenshaokoshodo Path" on a borrowed mountain bike. Fortunately, the trailhead is easier to find than it is to spell or pronounce.

The 22-kilometer scenic loop winds its way around Lake Tama, providing pleasant views as you tackle the hilly terrain surrounded by lush forests, with patches of tall bamboo and Japanese elm nestled in between.

I reached the trail from Yokota's east gate by heading toward

the Aeon Mall in Musashimurayama City. I then turned onto Route 55 and followed it north to the higher, semi-mountainous terrain.

Right at the base of the hill, I took a detour into an interest-

ing-looking tunnel mouth and found myself in a long, damp, but well-lit tunnel under the hills. This eventually turned into five tunnels, with small outdoor sections between them.

According to historical information signs posted at the entrance, the tunnels were originally used for a light rail and to transport building materials for the construction of Murayamaki Dam in the 1920s.

These days, the railroad tracks are long gone, but the cool tunnels remain, providing to trail visitors what I would imagine is some welcomed relief from the sun on hot summer days.

Back at the main road, I continued my northward trek and worked up quite a sweat as I began climbing the seemingly endless hill.

There are many places to take a break along the trail. My companion and I stopped to check out the Yamaguchi Kannon, a Buddhist temple with a five-story red

pagoda. Though the pagoda was closed, I enjoyed a view of the monuments and architecture of the surrounding buildings while we rested.

After, we headed toward Lake Sayama, located a few minutes' worth of pedaling north of Lake Tama. Besides riding across the dam, Sayama didn't offer much else. Like Tama, it is also a drinking water reservoir, not a recreational lake.

From the park off the edge of Sayama, we went into the town of Kamiyaguchi, which is known for many points of interest, including the pagoda we visited earlier. Two other places to see in Kamiyaguchi are the home of the Seibu Lions, a Japan Pacific League baseball team, and the forest that inspired the Studio Ghibli animated film "My Neighbor Totoro."

I did not visit the Totoro Forest this time—but a quick search online shows how similar the landscape is to the artwork

featured in the movie, helping to draw many visitors in search of the film's title character.

After we grabbed a quick bite at a roadside convenience store, we rejoined the Lake Tama trail at the Murayamakami Dam.

It's a pleasant enough route, but a somewhat seedy area. We passed an abandoned love hotel, one of several in the area, as well as a few illegal garbage dump sites—which I couldn't always see but could certainly smell.

Eventually, we found ourselves back on familiar ground and realized we had looped around the lake—so we cycled south along Route 55, down the endless hill, far less endless when downhill, and back to Yokota.

I'm a novice cyclist and this is probably the longest I've ever spent on a bicycle, so I was sore for several days. Even so, I enjoyed myself and wish I had seen the whole trail.

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WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

Mechanical difficulties

Military spouse friends find out the hard way on a road trip near Amman, Jordan, that sometimes our fate is out of our hands.

BY SIOBHAN FALLON
Special to Stars and Stripes

About 10 years ago, when my husband was deployed to Iraq, a senior officer's wife held a meeting to update the spouses on what was happening in Baghdad. At the end, she handed out magnets that said, "Put On Your Big Girl Panties!"

The second I read that cheery script, I loathed that piece of plastic. I wanted to stomp out into the parking lot and throw it as far as possible. I understood the sentiment behind it, how she wanted to impart an empowering message of self-reliance upon us — to emphasize that we could handle the flat tires and bill paying and children's manic birthday parties without the presence or aid of our faraway soldiers — but to me it implied we were a bunch of coddled toddlers in diapers. However, I smiled and said "Thank you." I later used it to pin my grocery list to my fridge and soon lost it during our next military move.

A few years later, in 2011, my family and I were stationed in Amman, Jordan, at the United States embassy. Not two weeks after we arrived, my husband was unexpectedly sent to help support NATO missions in Italy.

Now, I wasn't alone. I had the embassy community. And I had a military spouse friend, Katie, whose husband also deployed. Katie was much more fearless and "big-girl panties" than me.

I was nervous about living in the Middle East. I was nervous about driving in new places. I was nervous about not speaking Arabic. I was nervous about everything. Katie gave me a pep talk. She said I needed to get out of my pajamas, leave my apartment, and go sightseeing! Travel the country! Be adventurous! Let's show those husbands what we can do!

So I agreed, if only to have something to tell my spouse when I spoke to him next.

We decided to take a day trip to Ajloun to see the 12th-century castle built by the nephew of the great Saladin. I would drive since my 3-year-old's car seat was latched into our new Land Rover. Let me rephrase: the used Land Rover my husband had bought from a guy he met at a bar.

We set out for Ajloun in the late morning. We brought a few water bottles and some snacks. It was only 75 kilometers away! Three American blondes in an ancient land in an ancient Land Rover. We could go wrong.

After about an hour of ascent, just when we could see the castle on the hill above, the car stopped accelerating.

I pulled over. Smoke started billowing from the hood. There was the smell of burning rubber, of everything you never want your car to smell like. I parked on what should have been an overlook, perched high with a view of the fertile valley below, but looked more like a garbage dump, with crushed water bottles, plastic bags and dirty diapers.

We got out of the car and let my daughter do some ballet moves while Katie and I tried not to panic. I lifted up the hood as if I knew what I was doing. Katie called a few friends, but none of them could come and get us.

So I called the United States Embassy in Amman. I dialed the Marine guard unit that is the quick reaction force that protects the embassy, and the young man who answered the phone, after ascertaining that I was not under an immediate terrorist attack, kindly transferred me to a much less kind warrant officer who told me it was a weekend, he was with his family, and, though he did not actually say this outright, that I was an idiot. But he called someone, who called someone, who maybe called someone else, and a mechanic named Mohammed with a smattering of English called me back.

"Drive to Ajloun," I told him. "You'll see my black Land Rover on the hill to the castle. We have yellow hair."

When I hung up, Katie and I assessed where we were, on the edge of what seemed to be a small, rundown town.

That's when we noticed a man sitting on a white plastic chair, 20 yards away, watching. I waved my hand tentatively in his direction, but he did not wave back.

A moment later, two boys came out from a cement block building. They were around 11 years old. "Cash money?" they called out as they drew near.

"I'm sorry, we don't have any," we said, smiling. Jordanian hospitality is legendary. We thought the boys would help us, perhaps bring us back to their parents' homes, and at least let my daughter use their bathroom. "Cash money?" Their voices grew louder. We apologized and turned our pockets inside out.

That's when the sermon from the mosque across the street started to echo through the loudspeakers perched from its minaret. We couldn't understand the loud staccato Arabic of the imam, but the voice sounded angry, rapid fire, and it was easy to imagine him railing against the influences of the West. My daughter wasn't spinning any more. She took my hand, speechless and staring. I got her back in the car. Katie tried some of her newly learned Arabic on the boys, but they continue to shout, hands out, and she got into the car too.

We locked the doors and waved goodbye as if we were about to continue on our pleasant drive north. The boys started to knock on the windows. Katie, frustrated, reached up and slammed her own palm on the glass. "No money!" she shouted. The boys walked away. We smiled at each other. Katie had won!

But then they started to throw rocks. The man in the chair continued to sit motionless, not lifting a finger to stop them or help us in any way. We could tell the boys were throwing small rocks, not heavy enough to crack glass. But the stones were big enough that we were afraid to get out and chase them away.

Finally, a small silver hatchback pulled over in front of my car. Two young men stepped out gingerly, dressed as if on their way to a club. One came to the car, introduced himself in rough English as the long-awaited Mohammed, and then poked around under my hood for a few minutes in much the same way I had earlier.

They had no tools. No rags. No water. Little English. They did not look like mechanics. But they also did not look like killers.

They walked across the street to the man on a folding chair, and returned with a big plastic bottle of water. "Very good luck!" Mohammed said happily. "That man is mechanic!"

They managed to get my Land Rover going, fortunately, it was a downhill coast back to Amman. We pulled over every few miles to fill my radiator with water.

We followed them into the mechanic quarter of the city, full of garages and gutted cars. It looked like the perfect place to keep three American spouses.

Mohammed put my Land Rover in one of the garages, and then drove us to my apartment, told me he would fix my car as soon as possible, God willing, Inshallah.

We were home. We were safe. For a long time, when I thought of that day, I remembered my fear. How I was a useless, hapless American whose only plan of action was to lock herself in her car and wait. I was ashamed of myself for not chasing those boys away, for not trying to talk to that man (THAT MECHANIC!) on the chair, for not wearing big-girl panties.

But recently I've come to think that maybe that commander's wife would have thought we did OK. Big-girl panties or not, there are situations you cannot get yourself out of alone. Maybe there are times when wearing big-girl panties means reaching out.

There are times when your only option is trust. There are moments when the very best friend you have might be a stranger who barely speaks your language.

There are times when the wisest thing to do is to let someone help you.

Siohban Fallon's new novel, "The Confusion of Languages," will be released in paperback by Putnam/Penguin this June. She is also the author of the award-winning story collection about Fort Hood, "You Know When the Men Are Gone." Fallon and her family are currently stationed in the United Arab Emirates, where her husband is an Army officer with the American Embassy of Abu Dhabi.



Photos courtesy of Siohban Fallon

Mechanics pour water into Siohban Fallon's overheating radiator toward the end of her ill-fated outing in Jordan.



A better trip: Katie Monge; Maeve Evans and Siohban Fallon in Wadi Shab, Oman, in 2011.



Maeve, the author's daughter, twirls and plays ballerina on the side of the road as the trio waits for a mechanic.



The Land Rover ended up at this unassuming garage in Amman to await repair.

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE



CRITICAL HIT

Face-to-face connection helps drive the resurgence of Dungeons & Dragons

By NICOLE BRODERER
The Seattle Times

The elevator doors close behind you and you face a dragon. Razor-toothed creatures, some sleek as steel and others as gnarled as ancient oaks, are stretched across the doors. All the while, the lights change from purple to green to red.

This is where reality ends, and where the stories and characters that inspire awkward teenagers and accomplished adults to transform into wizards, clerics, bards and trolls begin.

On the third floor of a nondescript building in a Renton, Wash., office park, a stone's throw from Ikea and acres of car dealerships, Dungeons & Dragons — the tabletop fantasy role-playing game now in its 44th year — carries on under the ownership of Wizards of the Coast. (The Hasbro subsidiary has owned the game since 1997.)

In the past few years, Dungeons & Dragons — or D&D — has gained legions of new players, thanks to the rise of geek culture and the newfound realization that people need to look up from their screens, create their own stories and connect.

"It was the cosmos and us colliding in one magic moment," said Nathan Stewart, D&D's brand director and executive producer, citing the popularity of films based on Marvel and DC comics and shows like "Game of Thrones" and "Stranger Things."

[A] 2017 survey found that nearly 40 percent of D&D players are women.

"You've never seen geek culture at such a height as right now."

He also pointed to the 2014 release of the game's fifth edition, which was play-tested by almost 200,000 people, and designed to be more accessible to new players by streamlining play, simplifying the rules and putting renewed focus on the story.

There was also a new effort put on the inclusion and representation of women, Stewart said.

"As we went into development, we wanted to make sure that anyone who wanted to play felt welcome at the table," he said. "The more people in the hobby, the better."

It worked; a 2017 survey found that nearly 40 percent of D&D players are women.

"It's a special time, and I have a big belief that people are really craving face-to-face connections," he said. "Gaming is the perfect construct."

As a result, 2017 was "the biggest" in D&D's 44-year history, Stewart said.

He declined to disclose sales numbers but noted that in 2017, the D&D brand had a 44 percent sales growth over 2016, and the most number of players in its history — 12 million to 15 million in North America alone.

And, because more than 50 percent of those who started playing D&D since 2014 watch games online, the company is hosting its third — and biggest — streaming event on Twitch. "The Stream of Many Eyes" will originate from a Los Angeles soundstage June 1, 2 and 3. The story — which will be revealed on June 1 — was described by one D&D staffer as "The Da Vinci Code meets Gangs of New York."

The event is being called a Theatrical Drama Reality Role-Playing Game — or the no-less-of-a-mouthful "DRRPG" — with a cast that will perform a continuing story over seven sessions of D&D.

They will include sirens, rogues and something called a "high elf bard lizard," all performed by "influencers" like Joe Manganiello and Deborah Ann Woll of "True Blood."

At a recent planning meeting, staffers were tasked with finding "an actual blacksmith," fire dancers and keeping a close eye on fire codes. "It's absolutely the most ambitious thing we've ever taken on," said D&D communications manager Greg Tito. "But everyone loves this leap."

D&D was created by the late Gary Gygax and his partner Dave Arneson. They dreamed up a fantasy role-playing game that brought the wizards and goblins that people had only read about in the books of J.R.R. Tolkien to their kitchen tables.

"Fantasy has gone mainstream," said Mike Mearls, the franchise's creative director. "People know what an elf is. Now that society has digested those tropes, anything is possible."

The people who work at the D&D offices serve as the stewards of Gygax's legacy, refining the rules and expanding the stories. Gygax's pen is now in the hand of Chris Perkins, D&D's senior story designer. He has more than 68,000 Twitter followers and is a celebrity Dungeon Master who runs games at tables and on stages all over the world — sometimes in costume.

"Story is the most important thing," Perkins said. "It's the heart of it, and it's my job to write that book."

He calls the stories he writes "the framework" for whatever players come up with. "We're building the cup, not the drink," he said. "Our stories are meant to be a starting point. I'm looking for great stories that become shared experiences."

"I want people to talk about it afterward," Perkins continued. "These stories live on in their minds, and are almost as real an experience as any of



GREG GILBERT, SEATTLE TIMES/TNS

NFL player C.J. Prosise, left, sits down with game designer Kate Welch and marketing coordinator Pelham Greene at the Wizards of the Coast headquarters in Renton, Wash.

them have had together."

Jeremy Crawford is D&D's lead rules designer, the game's managing editor and also heads the design of the Player's Handbook. He started playing D&D as a 6-year-old, from the first edition, and spent a day with Gygax.

"I am constantly working on things that we can do better," Crawford said. "I have to restrain my impulse to revise things now."

Feedback from players is "vital to us," Crawford said, adding that there is one person on staff assigned to go through the comments and suggestions that come in.

It's also not unusual for Crawford to sit down at a table and play D&D with fans during game conventions. "I need to be in the world to see the blind spots," he said. "It's research for me. What's confusing? What worked well? All is that vital to how we shepherd the game."

On this day, the team was play-testing a new D&D board game that will be released through Avalon Hill this fall. It is aimed at young players and families who are new to D&D and designed to be easy to learn and quick to play.

"Given how open-ended D&D is," Crawford said, "I can see people playing it a century from now."

WEEKEND: MUSIC



Bonded BY THE BEAT

Sting, left, and Shaggy pose during an interview to promote their new album, "44/876," on April 23 in New York.

BRIAN ACH, INVISION/AP

Sting and Shaggy share chemistry on and off their new album

By JOHN CARUGGI
Associated Press

You can hear the playful banter long before Sting and Shaggy enter the room.

There's a genuine chemistry between the men that defies difference in age and musical styles, one that translates seamlessly into their collaborative effort, the new CD "44/876."

"The album is a conversation between two people from two different cultures, two different islands. One is kind of warm and tropical, and one that isn't — that's mine," Sting said. "And we talk about various issues; you know, various subjects interest us both. It's not just love songs."

The title is a combo of the phone country codes for Sting's native England and Shaggy's Jamaica, and they feel the songs strike the right balance for current times.

"We're singing about issues that we care about in a way that is not angry or polemic or aggressive. I think the world needs a smile at the mo-

ment because it is such a dark, febrile political time. You know, I think the world needs to just relax a little bit," said Sting.

Some of the songs dabble in politics, but it's the music that matters most to Sting. And that includes working with Shaggy.

"One of my greatest pleasures was to force him to sing," said Sting of Shaggy. "You know, he's obviously a singer, but actually singing in the way that we would define singing. Not rapping."

Shaggy chimes in: "Now he can't get me to stop."

"I've created a monster because he has a great voice and I'm taking full credit for that," Sting said.

In the early days of The Police, reggae was a big influence for Sting, so teaming up with Shaggy was a good fit. Sting also relied on some other musicians he's worked with in the past, most notably Branford Marsalis, who played on much of Sting's early solo work.

"It's nice to bring some DNA in from some-

where else and throw it in the petri dish that people will recognize and see what happens. Dominic Miller is on the album. Robbie Shakespeare came from Jamaica and played a couple of notes. He was just a presiding spirit. There were so many Jamaicans in the studio the whole time. I've no idea of what most of them are doing, except they were creating vibe. They were there for support and vibe," Sting said.

Sting and Shaggy kick off the European leg of their tour June 19 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

Sting prides himself on being a bass player and, back in the era of his old band, The Police, the rocker would play the big bass with his trio. But don't expect it for this tour.

"I don't think that would fit with the sound of this record," Sting said.

Then Shaggy tries to persuade him: "You could at least bring it out one time just to show off."

Sting responds: "Maybe I will teach you to play the standup bass and you will suffer."

WEEKEND: MUSIC REVIEWS



Photos courtesy of Atlantic Records

Charlie Puth

Voicenotes (Atlantic Records)

The delay in the release of Charlie Puth's sophomore album has been maddening. He already had a hit with one of the songs, "Attention," last summer. Another, "How Long," came out this winter. Now the rest of it is finally out and... well, now we'd like to apologize for being impatient.

The 13-track "Voicenotes" is an astonishing, glistening collection of summer-perfect pop, crafted by a gifted songwriter with a butterfly falsetto and a knack for hooks. It's so very 2018 that he named the album after the iPhone recording app he uses to craft his infectious bombs.

The album opens with "The Way I Am," and on it he addresses any critics out there: "You can either hate me / Or love me / But that's just the way I am." Puth then makes a good case for why we should love him.

The songs for the most part deal with youthful infatuation. He asks a lover to be understanding ("Patient"), suspects he's being cheated on ("How Long") and "Somebody Told Me"), tries to convince a girl he's mature enough ("Boy"), tells a girl to stop sweating him ("Slow It Down"), misses his long-distance squeeze ("LA Girls") and macks on another man's girlfriend ("Empty Cups"). Hey, he's 26.

But so consummate a songwriter is Puth that he also invites others into his party — and mimics their style. He made the finger-snapping a



cappella "If You Leave Me Now" with Boyz II Men and a groovy, uplifting James Taylor-ish tune in "Change" with THE actual James Taylor, a masterstroke and a highlight on an album already stuffed with them.

Puth had a hand in writing all the songs and produced the album. In the liner notes, he says they were crafted with the music software Pro Tools — and empowers others: "Anyone that tells you that you can't make hit records and an album that you are proud of without expensive studios, gear, millions of dollars or even other producers, they are wrong."

Perhaps the only misstep is the last song, the piano-driven ballad "Through It All," a kind of grandiose mic drop that channels Frank Sinatra's "My Way." With plenty of bravado, Puth sings: "I've already fell so many times but I got back up / But at least I did it all my way."

Puth has a fantastic career ahead, of that there is no doubt. But maybe this isn't quite the right time for his victory lap. He should have let the first 12 songs prove it.

— Mark Kennedy
Associated Press

Luke Winslow-King

Blue Mesa
(Bloodshot Records)

Don't look for ferocious twists and turns on Luke Winslow-King's "Blue Mesa." Though he well knows life is far from trouble-free, this is a collection of soulfully simple and effective songs with a wide range of guitar sounds and a mix of blues, rock, folk and boogie.

Returning to his native Cadillac, Mich., after a long stint in New Orleans, Winslow-King recorded the album in the Tuscan region of Italy.

While its predecessor, "I'm Glad Trouble Don't Always Last" from 2016, dealt with the breakup of his marriage, the source of his melancholy this time were the deaths of his father and of "Washboard" Lissa Driscoll, one of his New Orleans mentors.

"Thought I Heard You" is ZZ Top-style boogie with a heart of stone, while "Chicken Dinner" (written with Driscoll) has cool horns and playful interplay between the guitars. "After the Rain" is laid back, like something from the early 1970s by Taj Mahal or Ry Cooder.

Driscoll also co-wrote opener "You Got Mine" and the album ends fittingly with "Farewell Blues." Written after his dad's diagnosis, a combination of violin, slide guitar and accordion bears the burden of the emotions and Winslow-King uses to express his hurt with a deceptively calm in his voice.

Winslow-King has raised the bar with every new album, and it's the unadorned and heartfelt sincerity of the songs that elevates "Blue Mesa" above the horizon.

— Pablo Gorondi
Associated Press



Sevendust

All I See Is War
(Rise Records)

There are people who sneer at hard rockers Sevendust, expressing dislike for the metal band for its lighter tones and stylistic changes. To which we respectfully say: bit out your ears.

The Atlanta-based metalheads are back with "All I See Is War," their 12th studio album. It's filled with typical blistering hooks, driving grooves and infectious choruses, knitted together by Lajon Witherspoon's evocative vocals and Morgan Rose's tat-tat-tat drumming.

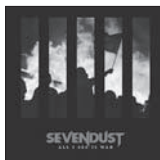
They have teamed for the first time with producer Michael "Elvis" Baskette, and he's layered more production elements and allowed the group to explore softer terrain. It's not a revolution — more like a step in the band's movement toward a cleaner, polished sound.

"All I See Is War" is a follow-up to 2015's "Kill the Flaw," which garnered the band a spot on the upper third of the Billboard 200 and a Grammy nomination for best metal performance.

This time, Sevendust is more in the hard rock category. Much of the new album could easily fit on a Foo Fighters' album, including most of the second half's songs — including "No Original," "Descend" and "Life Deceives You," songs rooted in bluesy or progressive rock. Old-school fans of Sevendust have "God Bites His Tongue," "Cheers" and "Risen."

Hate on them if you want, but the band does what it wants and deserves as many ears as possible. After a dozen albums, Sevendust has earned respect.

— Mark Kennedy
Associated Press



Arctic Monkeys

Tranquility Base
Hotel & Casino (Domino)

Some musicians need distance when they want to reveal their truths. Sometimes, they create characters to make sure people don't confuse what they sing with who they are. Sometimes, they change their names. For their first album in five years, Arctic Monkeys created a residency in outer space.

The songs on "Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino" might take place on the moon — or maybe a simulation of the moon — but their focus is most definitely life on Earth, rolling the story out like a science fiction novel from the near future.

"I just wanted to be one of The Strokes," Alex Turner sings to open "Star Treatment." "Now look at the mess you made me make ... I'm a big man in deep space."

He takes us through the results of escapism — even confiding, "Maybe I was a little too wild in the '70s" — over a space-tinged soul background, with Turner's lounge-singer delivery making it all feel that even escapism has its consequences.

The music of "Tranquility Base" is more piano-driven than ever from the Arctic Monkeys, although its lushness seems like a natural progression from their comeback "AM" album. What's changed here is that Turner is using his lyrics to consider broader themes and using his voice to convey a wider range of emotions. But the trippiness of "Batphone" shows that this is most definitely Arctic Monkeys, trying to make sense of their place in changing times and creating a classic.

— Glenn Gamboa
Newsday



WEEKEND: BOOKS

Paul Simon: The Life

Robert Hilburn

Paul Simon didn't start out a titan. The subject of Robert Hilburn's new biography, he began his career singing in a duo named for two cartoon characters, Tom & Jerry. Art Garfunkel, whom Simon befriended in sixth grade, was Tom. By 1964, they had renamed themselves Simon and Garfunkel, and within a few years they had become a musical sensation, selling millions of records and touring widely. They went on to win multiple Grammys over their long but fragmented career. As a solo performer, Simon's awards are even more eye-popping: more Grammys, the Johnny Mercer Award from the Songwriters Hall of Fame, a Kennedy Center Honor and



the first Gershwin Prize for Popular Song. Simon has also lectured at colleges and befriended famous intellectuals and artists, including philosopher Peter Singer, painter Chuck Close,

Nobel Prize winner Derek Walcott and Pulitzer Prize winner Thomas Friedman.

These awards and associations substantiate Simon's most visible personality traits: ego and the propulsive pursuit of his art. He learned early from his competitive father, a successful bandleader, who told him that "music was something to be treated with respect."

As a teenager navigating New York's dicey music business, Simon made friends with Carole King, another teen songwriter, was paid to sing on demo records and was savvy enough to make sure that he retained total publishing rights to his own songs. In the early 1960s, while in college, Simon played folk music in Greenwich Village clubs, but he was more comfortable, and successful, singing in England, where he was received as a talented newcomer.

He said he said history of Simon and Garfunkel's half-century collaboration is well known, and Hilburn supplies enough examples of their kvetching to wear down any reader. It's the songs that matter, beginning with their megahit "The Sound of Silence." First recorded in 1964, by the beginning of 1965 was No. 1 in America. By the mid-20s, Simon was a millionaire with many productive years ahead of him.

Hilburn is not an exciting writer, though Simon chose him as his biographer. Instead of feeling suspenseful, this version of Simon's life story seems inevitable, and revealing the long history of his career never quite zings as it should, despite his many accomplishments. Simon is widely quoted in the book. He hates being short, sometimes gets depressed and loves his family, but when he does take us into the shadows, he reveals nothing unexpected or particularly dark. No much drug use, though beginning in 1994 he started using ayahuasca, a South American hallucinogenic. He views his time with Garfunkel as "merely the first stage of his career," yet it's a stage he habitually repeats. Readers are apt to wonder why.

—Sibbie O'Sullivan
Special to The Washington Post

A passion for music

Former LA Times critic on writing about Paul Simon, struggle to protect artistry

By RANDY LEWIS
Los Angeles Times

Pop music writer Randy Lewis and pop music critic Robert Hilburn worked together at The Times for a quarter-century before Hilburn retired in 2006.

The pair sat down recently to talk about Hilburn's latest book, "Paul Simon: The Life," published May 8. This is Hilburn's third book since leaving The Times and follows "Johnny Cash: The Life."

Los Angeles Times: You chose Johnny Cash as the subject of your first biography. Why Paul Simon?

Hilburn: When I first went to the L.A. Times in 1970, the question I had was "Who should I write about?" When I began to interview people from the '60s, my first question was always "What was your favorite record?" They would always say Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard and maybe somebody else.

Then when I started interviewing people from the '70s generation and asked, "What was your first record — who influenced you?" it was always the Beatles, the Stones, Bob Dylan, maybe somebody else — and Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Chuck Berry and Little Richard.

So I thought, maybe that's what you do — you don't try to follow who's No. 1 every week, because that's often somebody maybe nobody cares about. So I'm going to try to think of the artists who, 10 years from now, the musicians are going to say, and the fans are going to say, "That's the person who was important."

Still, a number of artists could fit that description.

While I was writing the Cash book, I saw Simon at the Fonda Theatre across from the Pantages (in Hollywood). We was doing the "So Beautiful or So What" tour (in 2011). I listened to that album and I thought, "My God, that's a great album." I love the song "Questions for the Angels." I was thinking, "Who else is active today, who is writing music that can stand up to their earliest, best stuff?"

... So after the Cash book, I tried to think "Who's the best songwriter I can think of that would make an interesting book, and who would tell me about the whole issue of artistry: how artistry comes about and how you have to protect it?" There's the issue of fame: Look at Elvis — he was destroyed by fame and womanizing and drugs and stuff. All these artists have these [hurdles]: marriage, divorce, changes in public taste, laziness, running out of talent.

That's why I talked to people like Quincy Jones and Allen Toussaint, people who have worked with a lot of great talent, to see what characteristics they found (in Simon's work). And again, I thought Paul is so articulate, this would be fabulous. He could tell me about the songs.

You had Simon's cooperation — something he's never granted any other biographer — but you retained final approval. How did that sit with Simon?

There was this huge thing early on — in the second month, third month, fourth month. He said, "If you're going to London, here are some people you should talk to," and he had a whole list of names. He had



Robert Hilburn
Courtesy of Christopher Morris

people he had his secretary send notes to saying I'm going to be calling them. But then he said, "Now Kathy Chitty [his girlfriend during his early years living in England] is off limits." And I thought, "Here we go."

I waited maybe five minutes — this was in a series of emails. I thought, "What do I do? I can't let this go any farther." So I said, "Paul, I understand your concern and respect for Kathy and you don't want to invade her life. But nobody can be off limits. If I'm talking to a reporter, and they say, 'How come you didn't talk to Kathy Chitty?' I've gotta be honest and say, 'Because she was off limits.' That can't work, and it makes the whole book in question."

I told him, "You don't have to help me find her. I'm not asking you to have your secretary contact her. But if I find her, and she wants to talk, you have to be OK with it." Twenty seconds go by. Then he says, "I understand." That really set the tone, and he never violated that.

He often comes across as a sober, even somber guy, yet there is a lot of subtle humor in his songs. How did his sense of humor come out during your time with him?

He and his son are big baseball fans, and they have the All-Fish Team — all-time players with fish names [Mike Trout, Jim "Catfish" Hunter]. One day he said, "Of course, one of my favorite players on our team is Minnow Minoos." I'm thinking, "No, Paul, it's not Minnow Minoos, it's Minnie Minoos" [of the Negro League and the Chicago White Sox].

I was having the next morning, and I realized, "That was a joke!" It's subtle like that — he doesn't set it up ...

But he does have a reputation for being aloof.

He's had this reputation of being prickly, kind of a stuck-up guy. Even in the book, he says that when Edie [Brickell, the singer-songwriter he married in 1992] meets him, she says, "I heard you weren't a very nice guy." He says, "No, I never meant to be a bad guy, I try to be nice." But he's so focused.

That's the thing people don't understand: If Bob Dylan is sitting here, and you sat down with him and started talking, he wouldn't sit there and say, "Hey, how ya doin'?" He's got his own world. And Paul, if he's thinking about a song, he's not going to talk to you; Neil Young, he's not going to talk to you. Now Bruce [Springsteen], he would try to talk to you. [Laughs again] Bono would try to talk to you.

But some of these guys are just so into their world. I remember I was doing an interview with Neil Young one time, driving around his big ranch up there [in Northern California], and he said, "I write a lot of songs in the car." I said, "What if you start writing a song now?" He said, "The interview would be over." That's what they are. That's their artistry. It's the focus, the obsession they have.

Speaking of artistry, you spend as much or more time in the book examining his music as you do raking over the details of his private life. You don't gloss over his tempestuous relationship with Art Garfunkel, or his celebrity marriages to Carrie Fisher and more recently singer-songwriter Edie Brickell.

I think of it as two train tracks going in [parallel]: You've got to tell the personal story, because that's what a biography is. But I think what's important — beyond the personal story, which is essential — you've got to build on that and tell why he's important. That's the art part. And it went deeper into the art part than you almost ever see in a biography because, again, I wanted to stress the significance of it — why he's remembered: those songs.

When you think of all these songs he wrote ... it's almost like I wanted it to be a case study in songwriting. But I didn't want to do it to the exclusion of his private life.

So a casual fan will pick it up for the story. But for the person who wants to know about his significance and about the whole process of songwriting, that's the second train. I'm fascinated by both of them — but the second train in what gives the book its significance.

WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD

NEW ON DVD

"Black Panther": The film begins in the wake of the bombing in "Captain America: Civil War" that killed King T'Chaka (John Kani). After the death of his father, T'Challa (Chadwick Boseman) returns home to the isolated, technologically advanced African nation of Wakanda to take his rightful place as king. The transition is threatened from outside forces who want to get their hands on the country's most valuable asset, vibranium.

The script for the massive box office hit by director Ryan Coogler ("Fruitvale Station") and Joe Robert Cole shows there's room for both brains and brawn when it comes to the genre. There's a maturity to their story that's a major leap forward for a Marvel movie in both respecting the audience and the material.

"Black Panther" does have its problems. Coogler gets a little bogged down with scenes to the point that they begin to edge toward the tedious. There's a massive car chase scene where Black Panther gets to show off his skills that should have stopped a few miles sooner. And much of where the film is headed is telegraphed so loudly, it almost drowns out critical dialogue.

It would be enough to herald "Black Panther" because of how it prominently features a black superhero. It's still a major move forward.



MARVEL STUDIOS-DISNEY/AP

Chadwick Boseman stars in "Black Panther," a superhero flick new on DVD.

"The Bold Type": The Freeform series, a 21st century version of "Sex and the City," updates the idea of stories going from boardrooms to bedrooms with an approach that takes a look at the living, loving and working by three BFFs working at *Scarlet*, a women's magazine. The modern-day trio of smart, social media-supported women include Jane Sloan (Katie Stevens), Kat Edison (Aisha Dee) and Sutton Brady (Meghann Fahy). Each represents very distinct types, from Sloan's anxieties over her creative skills to Edison's awakening political and social issues.

Also available on DVD on May 15:

"Landing Up": Two young women con their way to surviving on the streets. That changes when one of them finds romance. **"Bent":** Detective's life is not the same after his partner is killed. Karl Urban stars.

"Die Hard — 30th Anniversary": John McClane (Bruce Willis) battles a group of terrorists, led by Hans Gruber (Alan Rickman), on Christmas Eve.

"LEGO DC Super Hero Girls: Super-Villain High": The young heroes face a new challenge from the likes of Poison Ivy, Killer Frost and Harley Quinn.

"Forgiven": Forest Whitaker stars in this look at the aftermath of apartheid in South Africa.

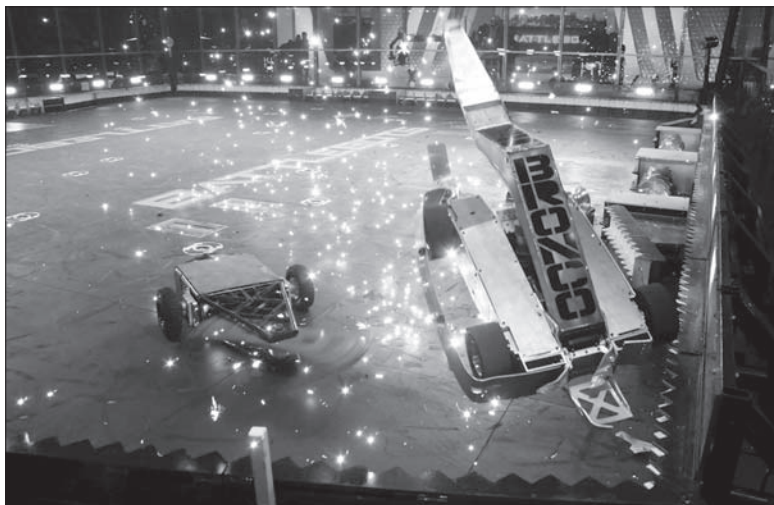
"Submergence": Two people (James McAvoy, Alicia Vikander) dream of being together again after a war.

"10 x 10": The dark truth behind a kidnapping is slowly revealed.

"The Monkey King 3": An impish magical primate and his crew accompany a monk on a mission to retrieve sacred scriptures.

"Rick & Morty: Complete Third Season": A mad scientist and his teenage grandson go on wild adventures.

— Rick Bentley/Tribune News Service



DISCOVERY/TNS

"BattleBots" — a show featuring machines fighting in three-minute showdowns — has new episodes airing on Discovery.

Clash of the machines

'BattleBots' makes changes to its format, including more fights

By RICK BENTLEY
Tribune News Service

The former Boeing facility in Long Beach, Calif., has been turned into an arena of destruction for the filming of a new season of "BattleBots." After a short hiatus, the series that pits monster machines against mechanical marvels returns with new episodes airing on Discovery and then repeating five days later on the Science Channel.

"BattleBots" initially was broadcast on Comedy Central from 2000-2001 and then brought back by ABC for the 2015-2016 TV season. It continues the same smashing, clashing and trashing format. Two robots compete inside an enclosed environment through a three-minute showdown. If one team manages to disable the other, they are the winner and move on to the next round. In the rare occasion when neither is disabled, a panel of judges makes the final decision.

Executive producer Tom Gutteridge explains the shift from the competition series airing on the network to finding a pair of cable outlets gives the producers the permanent home they have wanted.

"The trouble with being on ABC was that we could only do six episodes one season and 10 the next," Gutteridge says over the screams of the crowd watching the competition in the adjoining area. "Discovery is perfect for us because we are getting more time."

The clue that this was going to be a perfect relationship came when Discovery Science purchased the ABC episodes of "BattleBots" and aired them to great viewing success. The response was so big that the cable channel agreed to produce 20 episodes, giving the "BattleBots" team the longer season

they wanted.

"The additional episodes have allowed us to change the format so that we can guarantee every episode is going to be exciting. The way we are doing that is when we just had the 10 episodes on ABC, all we could do was one championship from beginning to end," Gutteridge says. "Because we have more episodes, we are putting more fights in every episode."

"It also gives us more time to take more of a look behind the scenes at the teams, the mechanics and the engineering that goes into it. We have gotten rid of the fluff of pure filler we had to put in a network show and distilled it down into a really, really exciting sport."

The robot battles feature a mix of 57 new and familiar robot teams from the United States and around the world who have created killer machines with names like Warrior Dragon, Tantrum, Predator, Minotaur and Kraken. All 20 episodes will be produced at the Boeing facility. Each team has a large area that is covered with tools, spare parts and the remnants of meals eaten between working on the robots.

There is even room outside one of the hangar-sized doors for a reinforced glass box the competitors can use to test their robots. If there is a problem and a piece or part goes flying off the robot, it will stay safely behind the walls.

The massive work area is also where the competitors wait to take their turn in the rectangle of robotic reckoning. Andrea Suarez is part of a group of robot builders who, after competing against each other, has come together to design and build the robot called Witch Doctor.

Suarez says the final design for Witch Doctor was the result of many team meetings. The biggest change this sea-

son from past is the elimination of a tiny sidekick robot for Witch Doctor that was able to shoot flames.

"It was really popular with the fans, but this season is all about redemption because we had a really tough loss last time, so we just wanted to put everything into the big robot," Suarez says.

Suarez is a longtime veteran of the robot wars, having started when she attended an all-girls high school that had a robotics team. She is a biomedical engineer who works on trauma implants when not in the arena.

Standing not far from Suarez is Ray Billings, one of the superstars of the BattleBots world through his success with Tombstone. It took only 53 seconds for Tombstone to vanquish Bombshell in the 2016 tournament championship.

"There is absolutely a target on my back because I'm the guy who won last time," Billings says.

Despite being the reigning champion, Billings and his team made changes to Tombstone in an effort to make the robot even more of a destructive threat. There were no wholesale adjustments, but just enough to prepare Tombstone for what Billings knows others have planned for his robot in particular. Billings got interested in "BattleBots" when the show was on Comedy Central. Tombstone has changed over the years, but the basics have remained the same because he knows that one-third of what it takes to be a contender is having the proper design.

"Then there is another third that is driving skill, and then a lot of it is the sheer workload of keeping it going and making the repairs to keep going," Billings says. "Finally, 10 percent of it is luck. No one wants to admit that, but it is there."

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

Fearful in your usual sport? Heed the warning

By WINA STURGEON
Adventure Sports Weekly

Ron is an athletic mountain biker. He enjoys riding the dirt trails that cut through the Utah mountains. He can be an aggressive rider, taking on the tough turns of lift-served runs that take bikers to the top of the trails at several Utah resorts. Occasionally, he even enters a mountain bike race.

But last year's mountain bike season was different for Ron. He still made it around the twisting berms without a pause, still held his own on rock-strewn or rutted sections of trail, but in his mind, there was an unrecognized and unacknowledged loss of confidence.

He avoided the more-difficult trails he once enjoyed. He spent less time biking the mountain. Instead of doing numerous runs or riding four or five hours, he might only take the lift to the top of the trail two or three times. He would usually call it a day after three hours. In the back of his mind, there was fear. He tried to ignore the fear, but it was there.

It was not until the trails were dusted with the first snows of winter that Ron realized the source of the problem.

He had always trained religiously. Several times a week, he would go to the gym and lift weights. His program was specifically designed to train his muscles for the athletic demands of expert mountain biking. On days when he didn't hit the gym, he would often spend half an hour doing crunches and pushups at home. He jumped rope for 10-minute spans several times a week.

Ron skied often during the winter, because skiing and mountain biking are good cross-training sports for each other. He also did something else that

is important for every serious athlete, whether recreational like Ron, or elite. He kept a training diary. He had a notebook in which he wrote down the details of every workout — the exercise, the sets and reps.

Ron referred to his workout diary often. He could compare his physical ability from one year to the next. He changed up his workout frequently so his body would never have the chance to adapt and lose fitness. Yes, if the body adapts to the same workout, fitness levels will decline.

So Ron examined his training diary and instantly saw what the dim fear he felt while mountain biking was trying to tell him: There were very few pages from the previous winter or spring. He had been skipping his training sessions. Instead of several times a week, his sessions had declined to several times a month. Ron was shocked.

He was still an expert rider. But he could have been seriously hurt had he gotten into a situation such as riding fast downhill and making a blind turn only to find a fallen tree blocking the trail. That's what his fear was trying to tell him: that if he came up against something unexpected, he might not be able to handle it.

That's a warning. Usually, that's what fear in the back of an athlete's mind is — a warning. The terrain is too dangerous for the athlete's skill level, or the athlete might not be physically prepared for the current level of activity.

If you are feeling semi-conscious fear instead of the usual pleasure of your favorite sport, pay attention. If fear is trying to tell you something, heeding the warning could keep you out of the emergency room, or save you from the downtime of surgery.



iStock photo

The ultimate, on-the-go 5-step fat-burning HIIT workout

Byrdie

You've probably heard the buzz about high-intensity interval training (HIIT) workouts. By now, and we're here to tell you that it's true. These routines are an incredibly effective way to rev your metabolism and sculpt every inch of your gorgeous body. HIIT mixes short bursts of all-out, high-intensity effort with periods of recovery. We like to do a few slower-paced, total-body toning moves during this recovery time to really boost that metabolism.

HIIT workouts are fast and efficient, so they're perfect for when you're on the go.

This workout includes five moves designed to tone your entire body. That's the beauty of HIIT. It works your butt, abs and upper body, all while raising your heart rate to give you that post-workout glow. Use these moves all season long

whenever you need a quick sculpting routine.

Remember, HIIT workouts are designed to push your body, so make sure you're refueling your muscles with plenty of protein. Go through three rounds of the moves below. Rest for 30 seconds between each round.

Squat jumps

Tones your entire lower body while raising your heart rate and metabolism.

Start standing tall with feet hip-width apart. Push hips back and lower into a squat. Push off the ground and jump as high into the air as possible. Land softly in a squat position.

Do as many reps as you can in 30 seconds.

Tummy toners

Sculpts your waistline (oblique muscles) and strengthens your shoulders.

Begin in a high plank position with your hands directly below your shoulders. With your core engaged, lift your right knee up to your right elbow. Lower and repeat on the opposite side.

Do 15 reps on each side.

Burpee and pushup

Boosts your metabolism and sculpts your abs, chest and shoulders.

Start with your feet hip-width apart, standing tall. Jump into the air, then lower your hands to the ground and hop your legs back into a high plank position. Lower your chest toward the ground and perform a pushup. Hop your legs forward with your feet landing next to your hands. From here, jump straight into the air. Modify by taking out the jump or stepping back.

Do as many reps as you can in 30 seconds.

Plank hip dips

Tones your core, obliques and shoulders.

Begin in a high plank position with your elbows directly below your shoulders. Twist your hips down and to the left, then over to the right. Continue this movement back and forth while keeping your core engaged.

Do 15 reps on each side.

Skaters workout

Raises your metabolism and tones your booty, quads and core.

Start on the right side of your mat. Squat slightly and jump to the left as far as you can, landing on your left foot and swinging your right leg behind you. Push off your left leg and now jump to the right, landing on your right foot. Continue alternating sides.

Do as many as you can in 30 seconds.

WEEKEND: FAMILY

‘Shouting into the void’

Artist's works embody emotional pain of miscarriages

By WILLIAM J. KOLE
Associated Press

Artist Ashley MacLure's world is filled with fairies, young girls riding giant moths—and anguished, bleeding women.

A grimacing young woman rendered in black and white is curled in a fetal position, splashes of crimson staining her bottom. Here she is again, leaning against a bloodied wall, her abdomen nothing but a large oval hole. There's a self-portrait in charcoal pencil—a close-up of a face pinched by sorrow.

In her artist's mind, this is what miscarriage looks like. And while MacLure's personal story seems destined for a happy ending—she and her husband are expecting their first child this summer—the high school visual arts teacher hopes her provocative works will help take away the enduring stigma of pregnancy loss.

“It's my way of shouting into the void,” she says.

As many as one in four pregnancies end prematurely in miscarriage, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine says. With miscarriage so commonplace, women increasingly are pressing for society to stop treating it as taboo.

Among them is figure skater Nancy Kerrigan, who revealed last year during an episode of “Dancing with the Stars” that she had six miscarriages during an eight-year span. Now a mother of three, she told ABC's “Good Morning America” the losses were rough on her marriage.

“We don't talk about it as fluidly as we should,” says Dr. Jessica Zucker, a Los Angeles psychologist and mother of two who lost a baby and launched a social media campaign—#HadAMiscarriage—to get people talking openly.

“The unfortunate consequences are that a majority of women are reporting shame, self-blame and guilt,” she says. “Loss is devastating, but the women who live these losses are strong. What they have to share is deeply important.”

MacLure, 30, who's had two miscarriages, says other women's stories can make her feel like an impostor. But her grief and pain—but not physical and psychological—are no less real.

That's captured in her art, which is honest and edgy—some might say brutally so.

“One moment, you're elated. And then it's just over,” says MacLure, who grew up in North Providence, R.I., and moved to Milford, Mass., after earning a degree in illustration from Rhode Island School of Design.

“It's very surreal. You're mentally in a different space, trying to think about the future. And then, suddenly, you're not.”

MacLure, who teaches at Black-



Above: Artist Ashley MacLure, at her home in Milford, Mass., on April 26, sits with a self-portrait titled “The Old Me,” created from charcoal and tracing paper on paper. MacLure hopes her paintings, inspired by miscarriage, will help end the stigma of pregnancy loss.
Right: MacLure and one of her acrylic-on-paper paintings in a series called “What Makes a Mother.”



PHOTOS BY STEVEN SENNE/AP

stone Valley Technical Regional Vocational High School in Upton, Mass., sought solace in her paints and brushes. She began somewhat jarringly by painting diseased ovaries and uteruses—a cathartic escape as she battled feelings of failure and fears that she might never be a mother.

She's since done a series of paintings on clear glass dinner plates—a fragile domestic item that seemed like the perfect medium for capturing maternal anguish.

MacLure's more whimsical work has been showcased in juried

exhibitions, she says.

“People want to see flowers and sailboats and landscapes and pretty things. I'm all about making people uncomfortable.”

Even so, MacLure is gaining a following. Women she's never met who have experienced the pain of miscarriage have been connecting with her, posting comments and sharing their own stories of loss and healing.

Among them is Lauren Lowen, a fellow illustrator who miscarried. Like MacLure, she's now expecting her firstborn this summer.

“I saw her art flash up on my feed, and I found it poetic and beautiful,” says Lowen, of Nashville. “Her work really moved me. Miscarriage is a unique form of heartbreak.”

Men, too, have sought out MacLure. Cambridge entrepreneur Chris Tolles reached out after his wife twice miscarried. The couple now has a 2-year-old daughter, but Tolles

still feels a “profound connection” to her art.

“Suffering is a real thing, and it's best shared,” he says. “People talk about miscarriage as though a baby just disappears, but the reality can be really gory and awful. Her work embodies that attitude of, ‘Here's real life—take it or leave it.’”

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Accepting, embracing the truth about our son

“It's a boy,” Doc Walker said as plainly as, “Please pass the salt.” It was April 4, 1995, at the hospital in Monterey, Calif. After 12 hours of labor, I eagerly grasped the waxy, bluish, 9-pound baby boy we named Hayden.

Two weeks later, when Hayden wouldn't stop crying and refused to feed, I called the pediatrician. Hayden had just smiled at us for the first time that morning. But my instincts were telling me something was wrong.

The pediatrician met at his closed office—you don't mess around when newborns are concerned. As soon as he saw the mottled color of Hayden's skin, he ordered us to go directly to the emergency room. After a hurried spinal tap, his suspicions were confirmed. Hayden had meningitis and was in critical condition.

We spent the next two weeks in neonatal intensive care, with our newborn slayed on a platform, attached to wires and an IV. The thought that our baby could die was so unfathomable, we couldn't accept it, so we carried on as if he was just fine. Nothing antibiotics can't handle.

It wasn't until Hayden was no longer septic that we shed tears. The certainty that he had survived allowed us to finally face the truth of what had just happened. The pediatrician ordered tests for Hayden's hearing in case there was residual neurological damage, but none of that mattered. Our baby boy was alive.

When Hayden turned 3, we could no longer deny the significant delays in his speech, motor skills and cognitive skills.

“Your son has Atypical Autism,” an Air Force developmental pediatrician at Lakenheath Royal Air Force Base in England told us. I think of that doctor with his feet up on his desk, but my disdain for him might have tainted my memories. He seemed arrogant, insensitive, matter-of-fact. How could he say such a thing about our too-headed little boy in Osh Kosh B'Gosh overalls? As he dropped this bomb on our otherwise happy lives, he sat at his desk surrounded by photographs of his three sons playing baseball, blowing out birthday candles, accepting citizenship awards.

What did the future hold for our son now that he was diagnosed with autism?

Francis and I were devastated. But, just like the crisis with Hayden when he was a newborn, we couldn't fathom that he would not lead a normal life. It was unthinkable. So we did every kind of therapy we could, always believing that Hayden would make progress.

We found a doctor who gave us the positive hope we were looking for, and embarked on a full-time home therapy program called “Floor Time,” along with a special diet, sensory integration therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy. It was like running a marathon—seemingly endless, exhausting work without breaks—but it was worth it because we believed that there was a finish line.

Hayden progressed, sometimes painfully slowly, sometimes in exhilarating spurts. After three years of therapies, Hayden's autism diagnosis (Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified) was downgraded to a sensory regulatory disorder. He no longer fit the criteria for an autism spectrum disorder, but we kept going. And Hayden kept progressing, testing out of all therapies by sixth grade.

In high school, Hayden made Eagle Scout, played varsity football, was an accomplished classical pianist, starred in two theater productions and took advanced classes. However, his lingering social delays, food and clothing sensitivities and other idiosyncrasies made me wonder if I had been kidding myself all these years. Would Hayden really lead a normal life, or was I denying reality again?

On Saturday, Hayden will walk across a stage at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute to accept his diploma. On Monday, he will pack a lunch he likes, put on a shirt made of fabric that he finds tolerable and drive off to start his new job as a software engineer at Raytheon Company.

That's real. That's the truth. And I'm happy to say, there's no denying it.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesoflife.com
Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@googlemail.com

‘People want to see flowers and sailboats and landscapes and pretty things. I'M ALL ABOUT MAKING PEOPLE UNCOMFORTABLE.’

Ashley MacLure
artist

exhibitions, and some has won critical acclaim. Not these paintings. Galleries don't know what to do with a likeness of her husband holding her as blood flows beneath them, or a plate depicting her naked and curled in a fetal position with a bright red blotch on her belly.

“They don't want to make audi-

WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

LOVE AT FIRST SITE
BY NEVILLE FOGARTY AND ERIK AGARD / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

ACROSS

1 Arcade hoops game
7 Some TV ads, for short
11 Went through channels?
15 Hitler's hither
18 "The Simpsons" or "Futurama"
19 Litter's littest
20 To whom Brabantio says "Thou art a villain!"
21 Singular
22 Good name for a deep kissers' dating site?
25 Vintles
26 A shroud of secrecy, idiomatically
27 Endlessly starting over
28 Performances at Paris's Palais Garnier
30 Manning with the second-longest QB starting streak in N.F.L. history
31 Numerical prefix
32 "Ish"
34 Monster slain by Hercules
35 North Carolina university
36 Victor's shout
39 It's all in the head
41 Member of a southern colony
43 Actor whose first and last names look like they rhyme, but don't

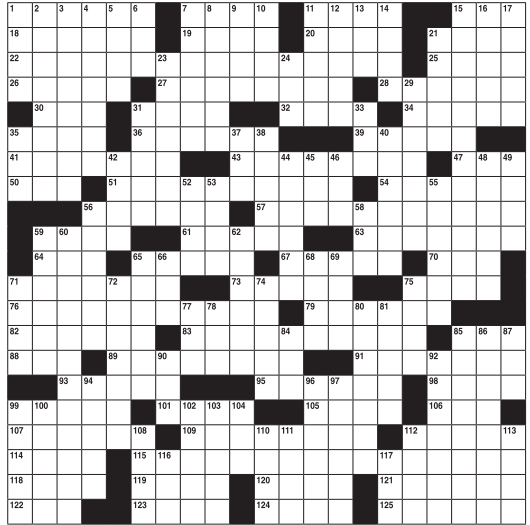
47 Slice of a timeline
50 Fruit drink
51 Good name for a dating site full of hot dudes?
54 Obsolete high school course, informally
56 Number one pal
57 Good name for a dating site of massage therapists?
59 In amazement
61 Emerald or aquamarine
63 Revolving sorts
64 Kitty-cat, e.g.
65 Carbo-loading dish
67 Putty alternative?
70 IV checkers
71 1988 top 10 hit for Tracy Chapman
73 George _____ University
75 Swamps
76 Good name for an extreme sports dating site?
79 Be traitorous to
82 Burger topper
83 Good name for a non-monogamist dating site?
85 Big Apple cultural site, with "the"
88 Alway
89 Southernmost of the Lesser Antilles
91 Napa Valley vintner Robert
93 Granannies
95 Previous name for an athletic conference now with 12 members

98 Comparable (to)
99 Sky-blue
101 Performer in makeup; typically dudes?
105 Certain layers
106 _____ Aviv
107 UTEP team
109 First things to go into jamies
112 "Trading Spaces" host Davis
114 Neat as _____
115 Good name for a dating site for lovers of natural foods?
118 Ad
119 Big loss
120 John of the Velvet Underground
121 Tot's wear
122 Junior
123 Lincoln Logs and such
124 Something taken on a field?
125 Ones passed on a track

DOWN

1 [Avoid watching this in front of the boss]
2 Sped (along)
3 Had a table for one
4 Chinese leader Xi
5 Rainbows, e.g.
6 "That doesn't impress me much"
7 Immediately
8 Natural light beam
9 One of the Bonties
10 Group dance with stomps and claps

11 Instrument plucked with a mezzah
12 Cools one's heels
13 Back in time
14 Like early Elvis recordings
15 Good name for a carpentry dating site?
16 The tie place?
17 Thompson of "Selma"
21 "Toodles!"
23 Noggin
24 Chairman and _____ (common title)
29 Ones to watch
31 Back-of-newspaper section
33 Poetic tribute
35 Org. with a flower logo
37 "Just _____ suspected?"
38 1940s vice president Wallace
40 Enthusiastic
42 Not new
44 Chaperones, usually
45 Lincoln's home: Abbr.
46 "I'll return shortly;" in a text
48 Swing time?
49 German interjections
52 "That's mine!"
53 "
55 Dignified lady
56 Model Page known as "The Queen of Pimps"
58 Naval officer: Abbr.
59 Geronimo, for one
60 Good name for a "High Noon"-themed dating site?



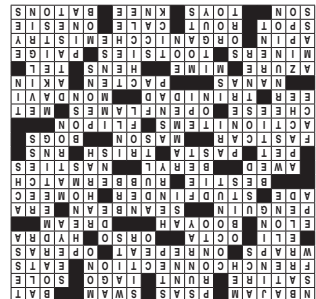
- 62 Hit hard
65 _____ Bread (cafe chain)
66 NPR host Shapiro
68 "2 funny!!!"
69 "To Live and Die _____"
71 Visage
72 Player of Robin Hood in 1991
74 Like child's play
75 Nautical title, informally
77 Whole lot
78 Prefix with center
80 Gnomous
81 Lowly workers
84 O.T.C. O.K.'er
85 Command of Captain Jean-Luc Picard
86 Satanic look
87 Cookie holder
90 Movement
92 Statistician's grouping
94 "_____ you the clever one!"
96 Gum ingredient
97 Titter
99 Stockpile
100 Nada
102 Certain computer whiz
103 Long span
108 Put in order
110 Camping menace
111 Digitize, in a way
112 _____ colada
113 Real lookers?
116 Down Under hopper
117 Gather around, as an idiom

GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com. Online: gunstonstreet.com.

RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE



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FACES



“Talking about [my anxiety disorder] for me has helped in some ways. ... [T]here’s a lot of dudes out there that have a tendency to sort of bottle it up and keep it in, and think that they just sort of — they’ve got to be a tough guy and soldier on. But that’s not necessarily true.”

— Actor Ryan Reynolds

Photos by AP

Giving good advice

Celebrities bring awareness to mental health issues

By JOHN CARUCCI
Associated Press

Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson has discussed his battle with depression. Mariah Carey recently revealed she has bipolar disorder. And “Deadpool” star Ryan Reynolds has acknowledged dealing with anxiety disorder.

As the stigma surrounding mental illness has declined in recent years, so has the reluctance many have had to discuss their own mental health issues, including celebrities. It’s become the new norm for stars to divulge vulnerabilities once kept closely guarded.

“I think anybody talking about it will help destigmatize it over time, but I think in particular celebrities or sports celebrities, if they have a platform and they’ve gone through any kind of issue with mental health, it’s good for them to share their stories, if they’re comfortable with it,” Johnson said in a recent interview.

“For me as a guy, you know, I struggled a long time with not only my bouts of depression that I’ve had, but also things that have happened to me early on when I was a teenager, that colored me as an adult. But I struggled a long time just to express myself,” he said.

Reynolds echoed that sentiment at the Monday premiere of “Deadpool 2,” where he explained to The Associated Press why he went public about having anxiety disorder. “Talking about it for me has helped in some ways,” Reynolds said. “In this age of toxic masculinity, there’s a lot of dudes out there that have a tendency to sort of bottle it up and keep it in, and think that they just sort of — they’ve got to be a tough guy and soldier on. But that’s not necessarily true.”

Diane Hughes is a professor of Applied Psychology at New York University, specializing in adolescent development. She sees great value in celebrities and sports figures talking about their struggles, past and present. “I think there is a benefit to it because it helps de-stigmatize it and to normalize it a little bit,” Hughes said.

She added: “There’s a lot of stigma attached to mental health issues, especially among teenagers because adolescents are constantly comparing themselves to their peers and are very self-con-



“... I do feel it’s very appropriate ... to talk about anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder and panic disorder and depression and all the other things that many of us deal with, you know, when we’re teenagers and even when we’re adults.”

— Actress Mayim Bialik

scious and worrying, (thus) creating a stigma to mental illness and help seeking.”

That’s why the Child Mind Institute, which provides mental health services to children and families, enlisted the help of dozens of celebrities for its new campaign called #YourYoungerSelf for May, which is Mental Health Awareness Month. It asks celebrities what they would tell the younger version of themselves.

Actress Kristen Bell would warn herself not to be fooled by the idea of perfection. Grammy-winning DJ Mark Ronson talks of being overtaken by panic attacks as a

teen. Each participant contributed a childhood photo and a home-made video. “We know that when famous people basically stand up and say, ‘I suffered and I got better,’ it has a dramatic effect on all of us, but particularly on young people who are so susceptible to the imagery they see when people wear certain clothes or people like certain music,” said CMI President Dr. Harold Koplewicz.

Actress Mary Bialik of “The Big Bang Theory” remembers feeling isolated when dealing with depression. She looks forward to seeing the shame around mental health issues fall away — and if talking about it publicly helps, she’s willing to do it.

“I’m not looking to vomit my entire life onto the internet,” she said in a recent interview. “But I do feel it’s very appropriate, especially for so many young people who feel alone, the way I felt alone, to talk about anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder and panic disorder and depression and all the other things that many of us deal with, you know, when we’re teenagers and even when we’re adults.”

Tony Award winner John Leguizamo agrees that famous people speaking out can help to de-stigmatize mental health issues, but it’s also something that needs to be taught at home.

“We have to have a little more compassion. First of all, it starts with how you talk to your kids about how to show compassion and empathy to anybody who is different than you or is experiencing any sort of difficulty,” Leguizamo said.

He added: “I think that’s where it starts, then you have to have legislation to help them get the help they deserve.”

AP writers Alicia Rancilio and Ryan Pearson contributed to this report.

Rapper T.I. claims wrongful arrest outside gated community

A lawyer for T.I. says the Grammy-winning rapper never got to tell his side of the story to police before they arrested him after a pre-dawn attempt this week to enter his gated community near Atlanta.

T.I. was arrested Wednesday after getting in an argument with a security guard, said Henry County Deputy Police Chief Mike Ireland. Media reports say the hip-hop artist, whose real name is Clifford Harris, had lost his key and the guard wouldn’t let him into the complex.

Police said the 38-year-old artist was charged with disorderly conduct, public drunkenness and simple assault and then released on bail.

The rapper’s attorney, Steve Sadow, issued a statement that his client had been “wrongfully arrested.” Sadow said the community guard was asleep when his client arrived at the guardhouse and it took “some time to wake up the sleeping guard.” Sadow said T.I. identified himself and sought entry, but the guard refused. The rapper contacted his wife Tameka “Tiny” Cottle, who confirmed that her husband should be allowed inside the community, according to his lawyer.

Ireland said T.I. was arrested along with a friend.

Markle says father won’t attend wedding due to health

Meghan Markle announced Thursday her father will not be at her marriage to Prince Harry on Saturday due to health problems.

“Sadly, my father will not be attending our wedding,” she said in a statement released by Kensington Palace. “I have always cared for my father and hope he can be given the space he needs to focus on his health.”

The palace has not revealed details about 73-year-old Thomas Markle’s health issues, but the celebrity website TMZ says he is hospitalized in California after undergoing a procedure to clear blocked coronary arteries.

Other news

■ Friends of Whitney Houston allege the singer was molested as a child by her cousin Dee Dee Warwick in a documentary, “Whitney,” that premiered Thursday at the Cannes Film Festival. Houston’s longtime assistant Mary Jones tells filmmaker Kevin Macdonald that the late singer told her that Warwick, the sister of Dionne Warwick, molested her at a young age. Dee Dee Warwick, who was 18 years older than Houston, died in 2008. The allegations were made in the documentary “Whitney,” which was made with the cooperation of Houston’s family.

■ The CW is saying goodbye to some fan favorites. A “Charmed” reboot is one of five freshman shows the network will launch next season — three shows in the fall, two for midseason. The network also confirmed it will be saying goodbye to “iZombie” and “Jane the Virgin,” both reaching five seasons, and “Crazy Ex-Girlfriend,” which is closing at the end of its fourth season.

■ Ruth Bader Ginsburg documentary “RBG” cracked the top 10 this weekend with \$1.2 million from only 180 screens nationwide. In just over two weeks of limited release it’s made more than \$2.2 million. Exhibitor Relations box office analyst Jeff Bock says documentaries don’t often enter the top 10 if they’re not politically charged or about cuddly animals, noting that “RBG” is neither. He says that for a documentary, “RBG” is essentially doing blockbuster business.

■ Pauley Perrette thanked CBS for its treatment of her, days after saying she suffered “multiple physical assaults” without describing them before leaving “NCIS” after 15 seasons. CBS issued its own statement: “Over a year ago, Pauley came to us with a workplace concern. We took the matter seriously and worked with her to find a resolution. We are committed to a safe work environment on all our shows.” Neither Perrette nor CBS have offered any specifics on what happened to her.

From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES

Max D. Lederer Jr., Publisher
Lt. Col. Michael C. Bailey, Europe commander
Lt. Col. Richard McClintic, Pacific commander
Harry Eley, Europe Business Operations

EDITORIAL

Terry Leonard, Editor
leonard.terry@stripes.com
Robert H. Reid, Senior Managing Editor
reid.robert@stripes.com
Tina Croley, Managing Editor for Content
croley.tina@stripes.com
Sean Moores, Managing Editor for Presentation
moores.sean@stripes.com

Joe Gromelski, Managing Editor for Digital
gromelski.joe@stripes.com

BUREAU STAFF

Europe/Mideast

Erin Slavin, Europe & Mideast Senior Editor
slavin.erin@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9350, DSN (314)583.9350

Pacific

Aaron Kidd, Pacific Bureau Chief
kidd.aaron@stripes.com
+81.42.552.2511 ext. 88380, DSN (315)227.7380

Washington

Joseph Caccioli, Washington Bureau Chief
caccioli.joseph@stripes.com
+1(202)761.0908, DSN (312)763.0908
Brown Brothers, Assistant Managing Editor, News
brothers.brian@stripes.com

CIRCULATION

Mideast
Robert Reismann, reismann.robert@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9150, DSN (314)583.9150

Europe

Van Rowell, rowell.van@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9111, DSN (314)583.9111

Pacific

Mari Mori, customhelp@stripes.com
+81.3.685.3171, DSN (315)229.3171
or by phone at 202.761.0900

CONTACT US

Washington

tel. 1(202)761.0900, DSN (312)763.0900;
529 14th Street NW, Suite 350, Washington, DC
20045-1301

Reader letters

letters@stripes.com

Additional contacts

stripes.com/contacts

OMMBUSMAN

Tobias Naegle

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Stars and Stripes (USPS 0471900) is published weekdays (except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1) by 50 cents Monday through Thursday and for \$1 on Friday by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 450002, APO AP 96301-5002. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA. Postmaster: Send address changes to Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 450002, APO AP 96301-5002.

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OPINION

Senator's plan best for GI sex-assault victims

By SAMANTHA KUBEK
Special to Stars and Stripes

This month, with the national #MeToo movement still in the headlines, the Department of Defense's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office ("SAPRO") published its annual report. The report stated there were 5,110 reports of sexual assault in 2017, but only 406 reported in court-martial. Even worse, only 284 of those cases that proceeded to trial led to a conviction.

Yet these reports do not even discuss an emerging problem: revenge porn.

In January 2017, a member of the 30,000-member Facebook group Marines United shared a link containing photographs of nude servicewomen. In March, the story broke. The commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps condemned such behavior. That same month, the Senate Armed Services Committee held a hearing and the USMC issued new rules restricting members who publish such materials online to the Uniform Code of Military Justice. One month later, survivors of revenge porn in the military testified on Capitol Hill. Subsequently, the Navy and Marine Corps issued new regulations, criminalizing the publication of revenge porn.

But this past April, the report repeated: "Hoes Ho!" — a file containing 267 images of topless or nude servicewomen, along with their names and dog tags — appeared on a 400-member, all-male Facebook group. Earlier this month, Vice reported that a brochure circulated on a New Jersey military base blamed "sexting scandals" on the photographed servicemembers, not on those sharing the photos. In the year since Marines United, Vice reports that 131,000 photos of female servicemembers have been shared on 168 social media pages.

The scale of the ongoing revenge porn

epidemic coupled with the new information from SAPRO highlights the insufficiency of the military's response. But this inability or unwillingness to protect servicemembers isn't new — it's been the response to the scourge of sexual assault within our military for almost 30 years.

I run legal clinics that exclusively serve female veterans inside Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals. Seventy percent of my clients are survivors of rape or sexual assault in the military (military sexual trauma, or "MST"). My clients are as young as 22 and as old as 93. They have served in wartime and peacetime. I am haunted by the terror and powerlessness these women have felt.

In 1992, Navy Lt. Paula Coughlin denounced the cover-up of her assault at the military-affiliated Tailhook Symposium, launching an investigation that revealed that 90 servicemembers had been assaulted in a single weekend. In 1996, 12 drill instructors were charged with sex crimes at Aberdeen Proving Ground, a Maryland Army base. In 2003, a torrent of sexual assault allegations at the U.S. Air Force Academy resulted in nationwide media attention. In 2012, the documentary "The Invisible War" chronicled the crisis of sexual assault in the military. In 2013, the Air Force and the Army faced reports of female potential enlistees being assaulted by recruiters.

The data show 14,900 servicemembers were sexually assaulted in 2016. One in four of these women, and one in three of these men, was assaulted by someone in their chain of command. Also, 129,000 servicemembers faced severe and persistent sexual harassment or gender discrimination.

In 2015, 1,307,781 outpatient visits occurred at VA facilities for MST-related care. MST survivors are more than twice as likely to experience homelessness. VA researchers found male survivors are 70

percent more likely than other veterans to commit suicide, and female survivors are more than twice as likely to do so than other female veterans.

The military justice system must be overhauled. It is unacceptable to let commanders decide what actions to take, who should go to trial, and on what charges. The current system affords no protection for those who report — a victim often continues to work side by side with the perpetrator throughout the investigation. The SAPRO report indicates that large numbers of perpetrators are given nonjudicial punishments in lieu of court-martial. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., stated that the report "shows that more sexual predators are getting off the hook and fewer survivors are getting the justice they deserve. While reports might be up, accountability for sexual assault offenders is going down."

Five years ago, Gillibrand introduced the Military Justice Improvement Act ("MJIA") to remove the chain of command's decision-making authority for certain serious crimes, including rape and assault. The main counter-argument is that this will undermine commanders' authority. But military commanders have abdicated their authority by allowing these men and women to be victimized. What message does this send to those who serve? The readiness of our military is at stake.

The time is now. Far too few stories of #MeTooMilitary have been told. Enough is enough. We must act now to support our troops by passing the MJIA, cracking down on sexual harassment and assault in our military, and safeguarding their fundamental rights. These men and women risk the ultimate sacrifice — that should never include sexual victimization by their fellow servicemembers.

Samantha Kubek is an Equal Justice Works Fellow at New York Legal Assistance Group.

An SEC move would put GIs', vets' nest eggs at risk

By JOHN KAMIN
Special to Stars and Stripes

While veterans groups have provisioned a robust bulwark on consumer protections for payday loan practices in an era of regulatory rollbacks, a new threat has emerged against a fundamental security of veteran and military families: their retirement savings. In recent months, regulators at the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) have publicly considered scrapping long-standing policies that protect the savings of servicemembers and veterans, as well as every American with an IRA or 401(k).

For decades, if a big corporation misled or deceived investors, those harmed by this fraud could band together to hold them accountable in public court. These actions have recovered billions of dollars for cheated investors, ranging from large pension funds for retired or disabled veterans to active-duty service members with individual retirement accounts. With military retirement funds increasingly invested in our securities markets, a dramatic policy reversal at the SEC could rob veterans and servicemembers of their hard-fought savings.

In an April letter to members of the House Financial Services Committee, SEC Chairman Jay Clayton broke with every previous SEC head — Republican and Democrat — when he refused to stand against letting corporations include arbitrary

clauses in their bylaws or offering documents. Instead, he stressed that he had "not formed a definitive view" on whether corporations should be able to force investors to give up their right to participate in class actions as the price of owning their stock.

On May 1, 133 organizations that work on behalf of middle-income, working Americans sent a letter urging Clayton to reaffirm the SEC's longstanding position on this issue. We at The American Legion consider any such policy reversal to be an urgent threat to active-duty servicemembers and veterans as well.

Due to recent changes to the military retirement system, everyone who enlists after January 2018 receives some retirement benefits, whether they serve the 20 years required for full benefits or not. New servicemembers are automatically enrolled in the Thrift Savings Plan, a federal 401(k) that allows members to grow their savings in the stock market — so servicemembers and veterans have much at stake if the SEC removes investors' best tool to enforce their rights. The TSP is an excellent retirement plan that offers high-quality investment options, but even the best plan cannot protect its members from the harmful effects of financial fraud.

When Bernie Madoff's \$20 billion Ponzi scheme made national headlines in 2008, Navy veteran Michael De Vita quickly became the public face of thousands of investors who lost everything. He worked as a

naval electrician, fixing planes at his local base. After losing decades of savings and the high returns he was told he had earned, Michael had to scrap his plan to retire at 60. His 80-year-old mother Emma had also invested in Madoff's fund, losing her late husband's \$1 million nest egg in the scam. She is now living on just half the monthly retirement stipend she had planned.

In the years since Madoff was sentenced to 150 years in prison, private attorneys have worked to return \$11 billion to defrauded investors, including Michael and other veterans — filing more than 120 class actions related to Madoff. Investors also recovered \$218 million in a class action against J.P. Morgan, which helped cover up the scheme. While Madoff's scheme was not conducted through a publicly traded company, Michael's story illustrates how investors benefit when they band together in complex fraud cases — an option that would be foreclosed if the SEC permits forced arbitration.

As the Department of Defense concluded regarding financial scams, servicemembers and veterans need to have a full legal recourse against "unscrupulous" actors — including the right to hold them accountable in class actions. To ensure American investors can keep their hard-earned savings secure, the SEC must protect the long-standing class action rights of all investors.

John Kamin is assistant director of The American Legion's Veterans Employment & Education Division.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Immutable realities for Israel (South Florida Sun Sentinel)

On Monday, we saw how Israel can look so strong while also being so vulnerable.

In Jerusalem, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu celebrated the move of the American embassy from Tel Aviv. Netanyahu also has boasted recently about a strike against Iranian military operations in Syria that might have threatened Israel. He also had a cuddly meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Meanwhile, Bloomberg News and US News rank Israel's economy among the 10 most innovative and dynamic.

About 65 miles southwest of the embassy site, however, Israel was drawing near-worldwide condemnation for killing 600 Palestinians and wounding nearly 2,000 others during protests along the Gaza border. The protests reminded Israelis that the enemy opening cannot hold off fundamental questions about the country's future.

As with his withdrawal from the Iran nuclear agreement, when President Donald Trump ordered the embassy moved, he did not address the day after. The decision was more about short-term political gain than long-term strategic advantage. Gov. Rick Scott and Florida Rep. Ron DeSantis, both Republicans, were among the 800 invitees to Monday's ceremony. Trump wants Scott to defeat Sen. Bill Nelson and for DeSantis to be governor. Not among the invitees were South Florida Jewish Democratic members of Congress — Ted Deutch, Lois Frankel and Debbie Wasserman Schultz — all of whom are Jewish. Their statements balanced all facets of this complicated issue.

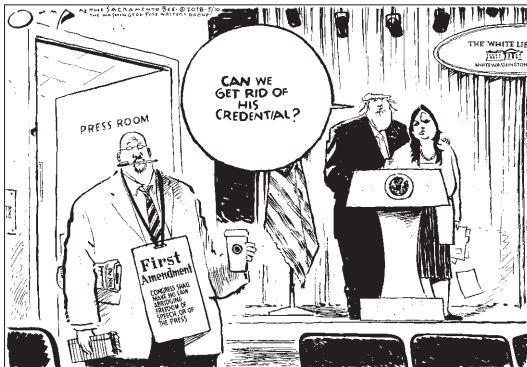
When I join Americans and Israelis in celebrating, Frankel said, "I remain disappointed by the absence of a serious commitment to the two-state solution. Divorced from a broader peace process, relocation risks more violence between Israelis and Palestinians."

Deutch and Wasserman Schultz have called Jerusalem Israel's "historic" and "undivided" capital. Like Frankel, however, they also have urged the Trump administration to engage with Israel and the Palestinians. By moving the embassy without extracting any concessions from Netanyahu, however, Trump may have ended America's long role as mediator.

The current crisis in Gaza dates to 2005. Under Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Israel withdrew from Gaza and removed all settlers. Though it shares a short southern border with Egypt, most of Gaza is surrounded by Israel. In 2006, Hamas Palestinian militants held elections. Hamas faction — whose leaders have rejected Israel's right to exist — defeated the more moderate Fatah faction. After a military conflict, Hamas ousted Fatah from Gaza.

In the West Bank, which Fatah controls, Netanyahu is under an explicit obligation to meet with members of the press. But it is absurd to contend, as deputy press secretary Lindsay Walters did recently to The Daily Beast, that "The president and his administration have been one of the accessible administrations," or that the notion that Trump "engaged daily with the American people" — presumably through his Twitter account — is anything like a substitute for answering real questions from real reporters.

Contrary to received opinion from those not in the business, good relations with the press are not about the politics, as such, of a chief executive. Reporters, for instance, American Jews, even as it increases among Republican religious conservatives who strongly support Trump. These "Christian Zionists," though, see Israel more as preparing the way for the Second Coming. They are aligned with the ultra-Orthodox, who dominate religious life in Israel.



Neither group seems likely to support the two-state solution that has been American policy and which Trump also claims to support. Without that solution, Israel faces more harsh reality.

A quick question for Trump The Orange County (Calif.) Register

When he was running for office, President Donald Trump was a fan, in theory, at least, of the regularized, semi-formal politician-reporter scrum known as the press conference.

He tweeted to his followers on June 6, 2016: "Crooked Hillary Clinton has not held a news conference in more than 7 months. Her record is so bad she is unable to answer tough questions."

In politics, as in everything else, there is the theory and there is the practice. As president, Trump has been almost entirely unable to walk his talk about facing tough questions — or softballs — from the media, whose scribes in turn report back to Americans the answers to their questions and the mood inside the room.

His first, and last, press conference as president was held a few weeks after his inauguration in January 2017. Since then, while he has indeed shouted out a few comments while walking toward his helicopter and responds sometimes to queries in what are called "gaggles" — spur-of-the-moment interactions with the small rotating press pool that follows him around and reports back to other news organizations — he has never met with reporters in an open session.

Having held just one press conference in his presidency sets a record for contemporary times going back at least to Lyndon Johnson's administration. By a year into their presidencies, President George W. Bush had held five solo press conferences, and President Barack Obama had held 11.

Times change — and how — and no president is under any explicit obligation to meet with members of the press. But it is absurd to contend, as deputy press secretary Lindsay Walters did recently to The Daily Beast, that "The president and his administration have been one of the accessible administrations," or that the notion that Trump "engaged daily with the American people" — presumably through his Twitter account — is anything like a substitute for answering real questions from real reporters.

Contrary to received opinion from those not in the business, good relations with the press are not about the politics, as such, of a chief executive. Reporters, for instance,

did not have a warm relationship with Obama, who they found overly guarded and more than a bit of a mandarin.

Of course, the press has reason to be careful about what we wish for when it comes to White House press conferences. At the one such session the president has held, Trump lashed out at what he again called "fake news" in the media.

"Tomorrow, they will say, 'Donald Trump rants and raves at the press.' I'm not ranting and raving. I'm just telling you. You know, you're dishonest people."

What in the world does the president — whose entire business career has been based on cultivating reporters to tell his stories — mean by repeatedly biting the hand that has always fed him?

Well, a question such as that is just what reporters could ask if he were to meet the press just as other presidents have. Instead, Trump again last week asked a question that is so very evidently wrong in its basic assumption: "Why do we work so hard in working with the media when it is corrupt?" Work so hard in what way? And he followed that rhetorical question with another, suggesting that he would rather the question-askers just disappear: "Take away credentials!"

Not a presidential hypothetical that bodes well for a healthy democracy.

Iraqis cast ballots. Now what? The Washington Post

In all the turmoil of the Middle East, the most significant development of the year thus far may be the democratic election Iraq held on Sunday. Sweeping, competitive, fair and largely free of violence — a remarkable achievement for a country that until a few months ago was fighting a war against Islamic State. Unlike most people in the Middle East, Iraqis were able to cast a vote against their government and the reigning elite — and it looks as if they had just that. The surprise front-runner in early returns was an alliance led by nationalist cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, a longtime enemy of the United States — but also an adversary of Iran's local clients.

Al-Sadr, a Shiite cleric, is remembered in Washington for leading a bloody insurgency against U.S. troops more than a decade ago. He's still calling for the removal of all American forces from Iraq, at a time when even some Shiite leaders close to Iran are saying they want them to remain to continue training Iraqi forces. Yet al-Sadr has shifted politically: Several years ago he formed an alliance with secular groups, including the Iraqi Communist Party, and has campaigned on a nonsectarian, corruption-fighting agenda aimed at Iran's local proxies.

Much of the Iraqi vote has yet to be tabulated, and it's too early to say what al-Sadr might plan in forming a new government. So far, the alliance of Hadi al-

Ameri, a militia leader close to Tehran, is running second, while incumbent Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, the U.S. favorite, is in third. The good news is that Iran's most slavish and sectarian proxy, former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, is running a distant fourth, just barely in front of the largest Kurdish party.

Weeks — or even months — of negotiations will ensue, and for now there's no telling who might head the next government or what its position will be on cooperation with the United States. Iran will be working hard to promote its interests, and the Trump administration ought to do the same. If it can summon the focus and diplomatic resources, there's an opportunity to reinforce the incipient shift toward nonsectarian politics built around support for Iraqi sovereignty — including from Iran. That could take the country away, at last, from the internal warfare that has wracked it since the U.S. invasion.

Al-Sadr has called for a secular government of technocrats who will respect the rule of law and civil society. That may not be entirely achievable, but it's a goal many Iraqis clearly found attractive. That they were able to express themselves democratically is even more encouraging.

Scouting together makes sense The (Huntington, W.Va.) Herald-Dispatch

When the Boy Scouts of America announced last fall its plans to begin allowing girls into the program, it seemed like a natural progression for the organization.

Clubs in general struggle with membership in a society of increasingly overscheduled families and youth. And, as Chief Scout Executive Michael Surbaugh said at the time, "the values of Scouting — trustworthy, loyal, helpful, kind, brave and reverent, for example — are important for both young men and women."

As the change was implemented, the value of Scouting was made a reality of itself. Families were seeing their schedules become more streamlined, they told The Herald-Dispatch's Dave Lavender for a recent report. Sisters who had been relegated to the sidelines at scouting events as "tagalongs" now had the opportunity not only to learn and participate, but also to compete and be rewarded for their hard work.

It was perplexing, then, to read and hear the outcry from those who believe the Boy Scouts should still be boys-only — that the changes being implemented were only a show of being "politically correct" or a power grab at what the Girl Scouts have built. But the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts remain different enough that there seems to be a solid future for both.

While the Girl Scouts organization does stand exist to provide a number of skills and lessons to young women, it also has a scouting curriculum, with a focus on more soft skills, such as confidence and self-awareness. Why penalize girls who have a desire to learn lifelong outdoor skills instead?

The Scouts BSA, as it will now be known, has a long history of nationwide footpath camp, Camp Fire, and is an organization to which local families already have ties. Already, Venturers, Explorers and other Scouting subgroups had been set up to include both boys and girls, who all have come together in the massive Summit Bechtel Reserve in Glen and WV, for a wide array of high-adventure activities designed for all.

If individual units want to remain single-gender, they will have the ability to do so. And Cub Scout "dens," as they are referred to, will be single-gender.

Scouting is a family-friendly commingle in classrooms, on the T-ball and soccer fields, in church youth groups and at a wide variety of other camps and clubs. They'll study together in college and work together in all manner of professional settings. Having a scouting setup that reflects that reality, the camp could be a place where boys learn and grow together through Scouting.

Frazz



Dilbert



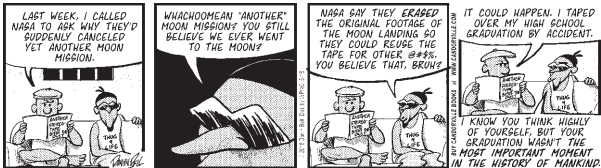
Pearls Before Swine



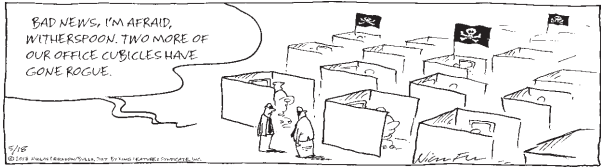
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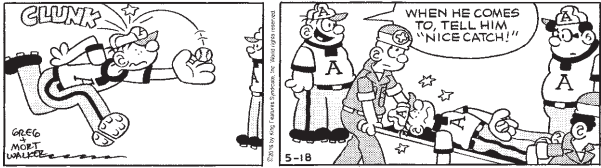
Candorville



Carpe Diem



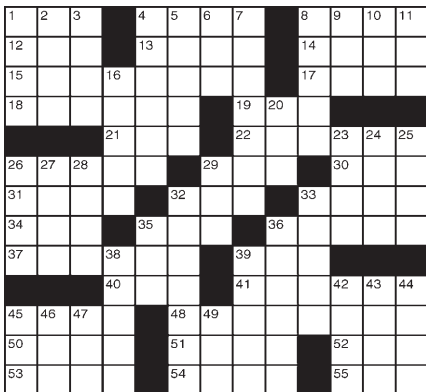
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- LAPD alert
- Halt
- Overconfident
- Singer Carly — Jepsen
- Cleanse
- Farm unit
- Refrigerator feature
- River deposit
- Harmonize
- Blond shade
- Capitol Hill VIP
- Salt dispenser
- Sudden onrush
- Quilters' get-together
- "As I see it," to a texter
- Big name in oil
- Dawn goddess
- Fuzzy image
- "Exodus" hero
- Upper limit
- "Heavens to —!"
- Member of the Society of Friends
- Standard
- Curator's focus
- Not moving
- Battleship color
- Milliner
- Greek vowel
- Lamb alias

- Brit. record label
- Nerd's kin
- Night light?
- Poorly lit

- Golfer McIlroy
- Cager O'Neal, for short
- Lima's land
- Largest continent

DOWN

- Met solo
- Treaty
- Borscht base
- Gershwin title river
- Spoken for
- Sugary suffix
- Sentence parts
- Malia's sister
- Roman 1101
- Web address
- Retrieve
- Requirements
- That girl
- Bagpiper's wear
- Flightless birds
- Jury enclosure
- Made of baked clay
- Quotable Yogi
- Mal de —
- Gotham hero
- Whitewater vessel
- Barbecue site
- Scratched (out)
- Big rig
- Decorate
- Showbiz job
- Fish eggs
- Chowded down
- Pub order

Answer to Previous Puzzle



5-18

CRYPTOQUIP

TNGY UQO NM GX EUQ JUT

JUX ONN PHPHL, TN U ANCHEY

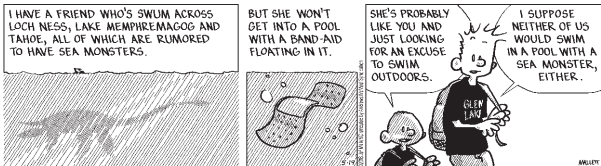
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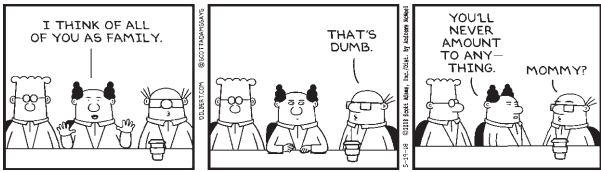
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: YEARLY CELEBRATION DURING WHICH THE PIG KINGDOM'S MEMBERS PICK A NEW RULER: CROWNED-HOG DAY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals V

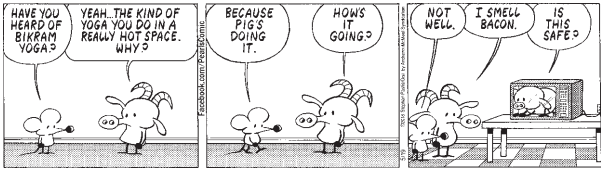
Frazz



Dilbert



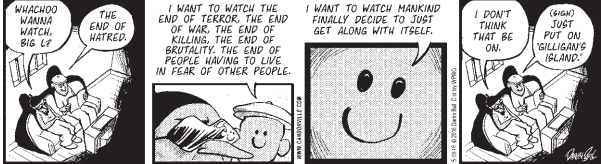
Pearls Before Swine



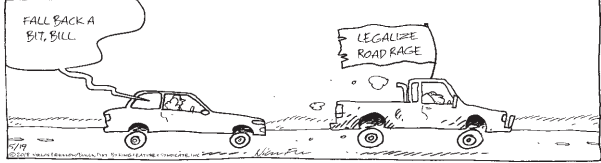
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



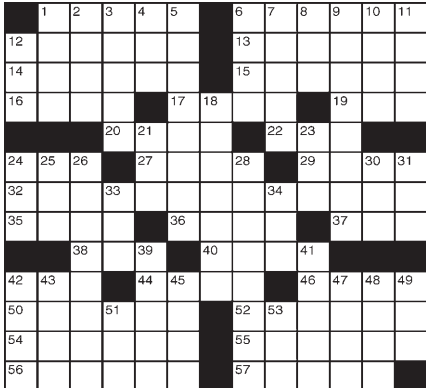
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Desert flora
- 6 Analyzes grammatically
- 12 Two-letter combination
- 13 Baltimore bird
- 14 Meryl of "The Post"
- 15 Supernatural
- 16 Actor Neeson
- 17 Competent
- 19 French article
- 20 La Scala solo
- 22 Weir
- 24 Hearty brew
- 27 Gaelic
- 29 Macadamize
- 32 "Cogito ergo sum" philosopher
- 35 Confront
- 36 Unhappy destiny
- 37 Needle hole
- 38 "Kidnapped" monogram
- 40 As soon as
- 42 Remit
- 44 Up — good
- 46 Harbor structure
- 50 Oliver Twist, for one
- 52 Fluffy dessert
- 54 Courage
- 55 Van Gogh painting
- 56 Theater freebies

- 57 "It's a Wonderful Life" director
- 23 Earth Day mo.
- 24 "Bow-wow!"
- 25 Meadow
- 26 Converts to code
- 28 Cost-effective
- 30 "Oy —!"
- 31 Jargon suffix
- 33 Moray, for one
- 34 "Mad Men" network
- 39 Trite
- 41 Furnish with gear
- 42 Splendor
- 43 Location
- 45 Till bills
- 47 Cold War initials
- 48 Cruising
- 49 "Certainly!" for short
- 51 Uplands,
- 53 Mouths (Lat.)

Answer to Previous Puzzle

A	P	B	S	T	O	P	S	M	U	G
R	A	E	W	A	S	H	A	C	R	E
I	C	E	M	A	K	E	R	S	I	L
A	T	T	U	N	E	A	S	H		
			S	E	N	S	H	A	K	E
S	P	A	T	E	B	E	E	I	M	O
H	E	S	S	E	O	S	B	L	U	R
A	R	I	M	A	X	B	E	T	S	Y
Q	U	A	K	E	R	P	A	R		
			A	R	T	A	T	R	E	S
G	R	A	Y	H	A	T	M	A	K	E
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5-19

CRYPTOQUIP

AY XNP SPWQT BNPRBX
RPWADU Z INZWR FTTJADU, AJ
FAUGJ IT YNBBNETR IX Z

QGNSC-ENWR QABTDST.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SOME ART ON MY CAR WAS WAY TOO VIVID, SO A POLICE OFFICER STOPPED ME FOR A GRAPHIC VIOLATION.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals L

INDEPENDENT NEWS FOR THE U.S. MILITARY COMMUNITY

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The first Stars and Stripes was printed during the Civil War, when a band of Union soldiers published a handful of editions.

During World War I, Stars and Stripes reappeared in Paris on February 8, 1918, to serve the doughboys of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), by order of General of the Armies John J. Pershing. An all-military staff produced it weekly until the war's end.

A second renaissance began on April 18, 1942, when a small group of servicemen began publishing a four-page weekly Stars and Stripes in London. They sold each copy for "tuppence" (about 5 cents) and in no time doubled their page count to eight pages, printing daily instead of weekly.

The first World War II edition of Stars and Stripes featured an interview with Gen. George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff. Marshall quoted Gen. Pershing, World War I Commander of the AEF, who described Stripes as a major factor in sustaining morale. Stars and Stripes later found a champion and protector in Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander and later president of the United States.

Eisenhower enforced a hands-off policy in regard to Stars and Stripes that continues to the present day.

Operations expanded, following GIs to the battlefield to bring them the news. During the war, Stars and Stripes published over 30

separate editions, running up to 24 pages per issue.

At one time, Stars and Stripes had some 25 printing locations in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and the Pacific. The Pacific edition was launched a week after VE day (Victory in Europe, May 8, 1945).

The war ended—but Stars and Stripes kept going. Its reporters and photographers continued to join American troops in the field, throughout the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, during the 1990s Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and in Bosnia and Kosovo.

From the 2003 outset of Operation Enduring Freedom, Stars and Stripes was there to report first-hand. The war in Afghanistan continues to receive steady coverage. And during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Stripes reporters embedded with military units in Kuwait and Iraq, as well as on Navy ships in the region.

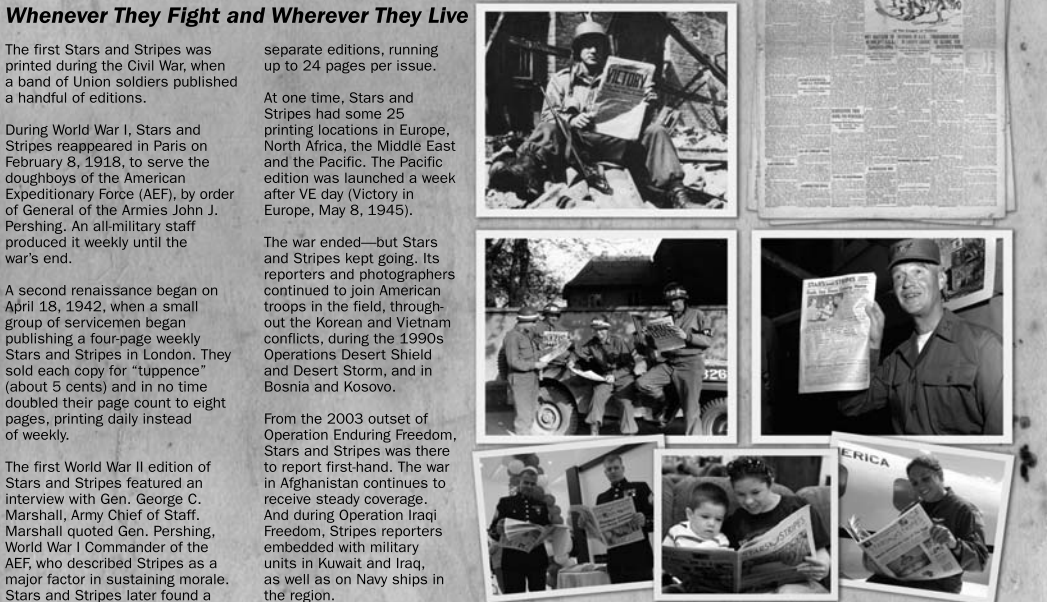
Stars and Stripes today is a multimedia news organization. The majority of Stars and Stripes unique reporting efforts is read now in digital form, either online at stars.com or via mobile offerings for iPhone, Android and iPad, in over 200 countries around the world.

The print newspaper is still available for servicemembers, government civilians and their families in

Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific—and in contingency areas. Washington, D.C., hosts the Central office, where daily editions are transmitted to printers in Afghanistan, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Djibouti, as well as in Germany, Italy, UK, Japan, and South Korea. Stars and Stripes also publishes several weeklies (Stripes Guam, Japan, Korea and Okinawa), designed to serve the

needs of their respective military communities.

A U.S. edition comprised exclusively of Stars and Stripes reports from around the world now serves stateside forces and veterans. The U.S. edition is published in partnership with commercial newspaper publishers who serve communities with large military populations.



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2011 Sigma Delta Chi Award

Breaking News Photography
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2011 John Reagan "Tex" McCrary Award for Excellence in Journalism

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2006 Military Reporters and Editors Awards

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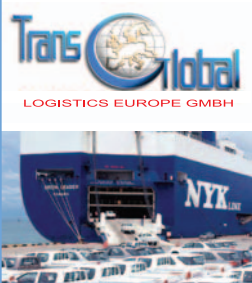
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HIGH SCHOOL: DODEA EUROPE SOCCER

Girls tournament

Rivalry could rule Division I

BY GREGORY BROOME
Stars and Stripes

Three DODEA Europe divisional championship girls soccer tournaments will begin Monday at sites around the Kaiserslautern Military Community. All three will culminate with European championship matches Thursday at Kaiserslautern High School.

That's about all these divisional tournaments have in common.

Each of the three concurrent brackets is built around its own distinct narrative: the continuation of an historic rivalry in Division I, a field of contenders without a clear favorite in Division II, and an overwhelming defending champion dominating Division III.

Division I

It's been three seasons since the Stuttgart Panthers and Ramstein Royals have played each other in the European championship match, and last year both fell short of the title.

Ramstein hasn't won a championship since 2014 and hasn't appeared in the European final since its 2015 loss to Stuttgart, then known as Patch. The Panthers saw their bid for a third straight title foiled by Wiesbaden's shootout win in the 2017 championship match.

But their rivalry is as intense as ever.

On April 14, the Panthers and Royals played to a 1-1 draw, a bickering, hard-fought, low-scoring entry in one of DODEA Europe's most compelling

rivalries in any sport.

That tie game is the only blemish on either team's otherwise immaculate record this spring.

Aside from its one-goal outing against Stuttgart, Ramstein hasn't scored less than three goals in a game and has scored at least six goals in four of its six overall victories. Defensively, the Royals have posted three shutouts and allowed more than one goal just once this spring.

Stuttgart has been equally dominant. The Panthers got off to DODEA Europe's most impressive start, winning its two Division I games before spring break by a combined 10-1 score. They also finished strong, scoring 14 unanswered goals over their final three divisional victories.

While Ramstein and Stuttgart have beaten everyone they've faced aside from each other, they haven't done so easily. And the teams that mounted the biggest challenges in the regular season are likely to do so again in the tournament.

The defending champion Wiesbaden Warriors are the only team this year to get two goals past the Royals, and they also enjoyed a decent showing defensively in a 4-2 Ramstein win on March 24. Wiesbaden has been on a tear since losing to Stuttgart and Ramstein to start the season, rattling off five straight wins by multiple-goal margins, capped by a 7-0 thrashing of Kaiserslautern on May 5.

The Naples Wildcats, who reached the 2016 championship game, and claimed third place a year ago, gave Stuttgart a serious scare in a 1-0 loss

to the Panthers on April 20. That outcome, and their otherwise unbeaten regular season, position the Wildcats as legitimate threats to claim the break-through championship they've chased since moving up to Division I.

The Vicenza Cougars showed their own potential in a 1-1 tie with Naples on April 13. Lower seeds SHAPE, Kaiserslautern, Lakenheath and Vilsack face uphill climbs to the elimination round.

Division II

Several teams in Division II can present a convincing case as a championship contender. But no team's case is convincing enough to make a run-away favorite to survive this year's most unpredictable bracket.

The Rota Admirals are the frontrunner, carrying a 5-0 overall record and 4-0 divisional record. Rota stood up well to an increased regular-season workload of games and travel, wrapping up the ramped-up slate with a 4-0 shutout of Signella in distant Sicily.

But Rota's narrow margin of victory against its toughest Division II opponents portends a tough path through the tournament. The Admirals edged Spangdahlem and Marymount by matching 2-1 scores on consecutive weekends in April.

Marymount was the breakout Division II team of the season until its loss to Rota quelled its momentum. A 1-0 defeat over a solid Black Forest Academy squad a week after its only divisional loss put the Royals back on track heading into the postseason.

AFNORTH, meanwhile, played one of the more bizarre regular seasons in re-



MICHAEL B. KELLER/Stars and Stripes

Baumholder's Annabel Brinkmeyer shoots between AFNORTH's Michala Milewski, left, and Melany Macaulay in Baumholder, Germany, on April 27.

cent memory. The Lions played four tie games this season and won their other three matches to join Rota as the only Division II girls teams with undefeated records. That ability to keep games close and avoid losses suggests good things for the tournament; still, the Lions put down Brussels 4-1, on May 5 to enter the playoffs on a winning note.

Spangdahlem is one of the teams to play AFNORTH to a draw, coupled with its one-goal loss to Rota, the Sentinels are squarely in the mix of potential champions despite their lack of a divisional win. Black Forest is in a similar predicament; its loss to Marymount denied it a Division II victory, but the Falcons emerged from a tough schedule with a respectable 2-3-1 overall mark.

In contrast, American Overseas School of Rome's 2-2 divisional mark is sullied by a decisive 4-1 loss to Rota. Aviano, Florence and Bahrain round out the nine-team Division II bracket.

Division III

The Alconbury Dragons have won

the last three European small-school championships, and appear headed for another after a perfect 3-0 divisional performance. But there are two reasons to question that assumed outcome.

First, the Dragons didn't play either of the two teams that figure to be their toughest tournament opponents.

The Hohenfels Tigers carved out a 2-3-0 overall record against a tough schedule filled with much larger schools, even recording a 4-2 defeat of Division I neighbor Vilsack. The Signella Jaguars played strictly upper-division Italian leagues, and came away with encouraging wins over Division II squads Aviano and Florence.

Second, none of Alconbury's title-game victories have come by more than a single-goal margin.

Brussels and Baumholder, both of which lost to Alconbury this regular season, fill out the five-team Division III field.

broome.gregory@stripes.com
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Boys tournament

Ramstein, Rome, Brussels are teams to watch

BY GREGORY BROOME
Stars and Stripes

In general, there are two avenues to soccer success—scoring a lot of goals or preventing the other team from scoring.

But the best teams—the ones likely to enjoy the most success at the DODEA Europe boys soccer championship tournaments, running Monday through Thursday at sites around the Kaiserslautern Military Community—are adept at doing both and giving themselves the best mathematical opportunities to win and advance.

Division I

For years, the Ramstein Royals played a style with a low margin for error, focusing efforts on defense and ball control and trusting that circumstances would create a goal-scoring chance or two on the opposite end.

As reliable as that approach was, the Royals eagerly scrapped that style this spring in favor of a more offensive tilt, made possible by an influx of new offensive talent. The results have proven the wisdom of that tactical shift.

Ramstein hasn't scored less than three goals in a match since spring break, when its new front line came fully online. That output includes 21 total goals in four wins over Division I opponents, capped by a 7-0 shutout of Lakenheath in its regular-season finale.

The Royals' defense has largely held up in their offense has flourished, holding opponents scoreless



MARTIN EGNASH/Stars and Stripes

Ansbach's Zach Blaser, right, brings the ball toward Hohenfels' goal, during a match at Hohenfels, Germany.

in five of the team's seven games.

The Stuttgart Panthers came the closest to solving Ramstein's two-way attack in a 4-3 loss on April 14. And the Panthers have proven their own two-way abilities this spring, combining offensive and defensive dominance in a 4-1 defeat of the defending champion Kaiserslautern Raiders on March 24 and a 3-0 shutout of the Naples Wildcats on April 20.

Stuttgart is at the fore of a strong set of contenders ready to give Ramstein trouble. That group includes the Wiesbaden Warriors and SHAPE Spartans along with the Raiders and Wildcats.

Wiesbaden has coaxed all of the high-level Division I opponents it's played into gritty, low-scoring

matchups. The Warriors beat Stuttgart 1-0 and lost to Ramstein 1-0 before spring break. A signature 1-0 victory over Kaiserslautern on May 4 was flipped to a demoralizing loss when DODEA Europe ruled the game a 1-0 Raider win by forfeit due to an ineligible Warrior player.

SHAPE acquitted itself well in a 3-1 loss to the Royals on April 20 and hasn't lost before or since, including a 1-1 tie with Stuttgart on the final day of the regular season.

Lower-regarded teams such as Lakenheath, Vicenza and Vilsack will look to make a surprising run in the bracket, a mission that will be slightly more manageable in the absence of International School of Brussels, which withdrew from DODEA Europe soccer this school year.

Division II

Another all-Rome championship match is the likeliest outcome of DODEA Europe's middle-class bracket, again dominated by the ongoing dynasty of the Marymount Royals and their fierce cross-town rival, the American Overseas School of Rome.

The Roman powers have a history of pushing each other to the limit. Marymount escaped last year's European championship match with a 3-2 overtime victory, earning its second straight championship and sixth in the past seven seasons. AOSR struck back this spring, handing the Royals a 5-3 loss on March 24.

While the two dynamic Italian programs are likely headed for a championship-game rematch, it's far from guaranteed.

AFNORTH beat Spangdahlem 6-3 in its only Division II game of the spring and has the goal scorers necessary to reach the bracket's later stages. Black Forest can pin its title hopes on a 3-3 tie with Marymount in late April. And Florence played both returning finalists tough, falling to Marymount 2-1 and AOSR 3-2.

Bahrain, the 2016 champ, enters as a wild card without a DODEA Europe regular-season schedule. Low seeds Aviano and Rota, meanwhile, will take their own shots at upending the status quo.

Division III

The defending champion Brussels Brigands have by far the most impressive résumé of any team in the small-school bracket.

Brussels is 4-0 in its division and 7-1 overall, with its only loss a very respectable 2-1 defeat to solid Division I program SHAPE. The Brigands are elite on offense and defense, scoring 29 goals on the season while yielding just five.

But one score from this spring indicates that Brussels' road to a title isn't entirely cleared of obstacles. The Brigands edged the co-ed Ansbach Cougars 2-1 on April 21 in a tighter rematch of last year's 3-0 Brussels win in the European championship match.

Signella, which didn't play a divisional game and largely struggled against larger Italian opposition this spring, joins Alconbury, Hohenfels and Baumholder on the list of teams hoping to prevent a repeat of last year's title game matchup.

broome.gregory@stripes.com
Twitter: @broomestripes

HIGH SCHOOL: FAR EAST SOCCER

‘Rock steady’ defense leads Kinnick

By DAVE ORNAUER

Stars and Stripes

Travis Stevens might have been happy enough about his team capturing the title in last month's DODEA Japan boys soccer tournament. But the way his Kinnick team won the event was what really pleased him.

In five matches, the Red Devils scored 20 goals, including six in the championship match against Perry. But in that span, Kinnick allowed just one goal, something Stevens says is an indicator of the balance his team possesses.

“Our offense is powerful,” Stevens said of a unit led by Kai Sullivan (34 goals), Tatsuya Casey (28) and Akimanzhi Sibbo (13 goals, 13 assists). “But they realize they can go heavy up front because they know that the defense is rock steady.”

It's the sort of combined effort that Stevens says he hopes will lead to the first Far East Division I title in school history.

They begin play Monday at Kubasaki's Mike Perry Stadium in a tournament that features just four teams, including defending champion Kadena, 2016 champion Kubasaki and 2015 champion Seoul American.

The Panthers feature their own solid defender in Quentin Moore and the Dragons have a solid scoring threat in Judge Morgan (18 goals).

Rain is forecast the second two days of the three-day tournament, which could lead play to be moved to Ryukyū Middle School's Habu Field on Kadena Air Base for the third straight year.

Meanwhile, at Misawa Air Base in northeastern Japan, the Division II tournament begins Monday with Christian Academy Japan putting its title on the line in a nine-team, double-elimination event. The forecast there looks OK, if not a bit chilly for the three days.

Wet or dry conditions, the Red Devils plan to rely on a defense led by Kei Downs, who



VANESSA BADIOLA/Special to Stars and Stripes

Cael Bowen, right, and a staunch defense helped Kinnick to a 19-1-1 record.

played midfield last season; Nathan Scheidt, who transferred from Seoul American; and goalkeeper Nicholas Burk.

Having those players allows the ones in front to “take risks,” Stevens said. “It builds confidence in the rest of the team, knowing they have a good line in back.”

Scheidt, in particular, can be a threat not only in back but taking free kicks and corner kicks, any of which can be a scoring opportunity.

“The kid can stick it a mile, even in the

wind, he can bomb them 65 yards. He was a huge pickup for us this year,” he said.

Still, Kinnick isn't expecting anything other than a tough battle, Stevens said.

“Kadena and Kubasaki, they're powerhouse teams,” he said. “Going there is always a mystery, that first day, to see how good they are. And they're always good.”

To beat Kadena means getting the ball past Moore, his defensive sidekick Nao Heckerman and goalkeeper Jonathan Ferguson. “Without them, we don't win,” Panthers coach Chris Anderson said. “They're the keystone. They hold everything together.”

Morgan transferred in to Kubasaki from Virginia and “adds a certain level of experience and athleticism” to a Kubasaki attack that was already strong with Ryo Elliot and Elijah Washington.

In the D-II tournament, CAJ has firepower, including brothers Angus (13 goals) and Jacky Holmes (nine goals) and steady, balanced play through the pitch.

Perry, the 2016 champion with six D-II titles to its credit, brings the Pacific's single-season goal-scoring record holder in junior striker Kai Lange (72 goals).

Yet even he might not be enough to solve the Knights, who tied the Red Devils 1 first in last season CAJ and Kinnick met in March; the Knights handed the Red Devils their only loss last month.

“They can win either D-I or D-II; they're a good soccer team,” Stevens said.

And despite having that strong scoring weapon in Lange, that guarantees nothing for the Samurai, according to Lange's father and coach Mark Lange.

“Defense wins championships, no question,” Mark Lange said. “It's nice to have goal scoring, but 1-0 will still get you a championship. But we're not going to tell Kai to stop scoring.”

ornaue.dave@stripes.com
Twitter @ornaue_stripes

Scoreboard

Boys Division I

Site — Camp Foster, Okinawa.
Dates — May 21-23
Participating teams — Kubasaki, Kadena, Kinnick, Seoul American.
Format — Round robin followed by single-elimination playoffs Tuesday and Wednesday.

Returning All-Far East players — Kubasaki: Elijah Washington (two-time selection), Ryo Elliot (two-time selection), Joshua Swen; Kadena: Quentin Moore, Nao Heckerman; Kinnick: Kinnick; Nathan Scheidt (D-I selection with Seoul in 2017); Division II selection with Daegu in 2016; Akimanzhi Sibbo.

Monday's matches
Kadena vs. Seoul, 9 a.m.
Kubasaki vs. Kinnick, 11 a.m.
Seoul vs. Kubasaki, 4 p.m.
Kinnick vs. Kadena, 4 p.m.
Tuesday's matches
Kubasaki vs. Kadena, 9 a.m.
Kinnick vs. Seoul, 11 a.m.

Semifinals
Tuesday
2 vs. 3, 2 p.m.
1 vs. 4, 4 p.m.

Wednesday's matches
Third place: semifinals losers, 10 a.m.
Championship: 12:30 p.m.

Boys Division II

Dates — May 21-23, 2018
Site — Misawa Air Base, Japan.
Participating teams — Osan, Daegu, Humphreys, E.J. King, Zama, Perry, Edgren, Yokota, Christian Academy Japan.

Returning All-Tournament players
CAJ: Jacky Holmes; Perry: Kai Lange (2016 MVP), Dylan Erceg (2015 MVP); Zama: Kai Biv, Goro Yopio Jr.; Daegu: Gage Zach; Osan: Minsung Kim; Humphreys: Jalen Koushington.

Format — Pool play, Modified double-elimination playoffs with consolation.

Pool A
CAJ vs. King, 9 a.m.
CAJ vs. Yokota, noon
Yokota vs. King, 3 p.m.

Pool B
Zama vs. Daegu, 10 a.m.
Perry vs. Zama, 12 p.m.
Perry vs. Daegu, 4 p.m.

Pool C
Humphreys vs. Edgren, 11 a.m.
Osan vs. Edgren, 2 p.m.
Osan vs. Humphreys, 4 p.m.

Double-elimination playoffs
Tuesday's matches
B2 vs. C3, 8 a.m.
A1 vs. B2, 8:15 a.m.
B1 vs. A1, 10:35 a.m.
C2 vs. B3, 11:15 a.m.
C1 vs. B2/C3 winner, 11:55 a.m.

Semifinals: 11:15 p.m. in 2018, 2 p.m. in 2017.
Championship: 2018, 4 p.m. in 2017.

Girls Division I

Dates — May 21-23
Sites — Camp Humphreys, South Korea.
Participating teams — Kinnick, American School in Japan, Kubasaki, Kadena, Seoul American.
Format — Round-robin play first, single-elimination playoffs and consolation round-robin.

Returning All-Far East players — Kubasaki: Lexi Klinek (Best Goalkeeper in 2016), Tasha Odum; Kinnick: Ella Eisenhardt, Allie Vincent (Best Goalkeeper in 2017); Riasa Guenther; Annalicia Santos; ASJ: Kennedy Baca; Kadena: Pamela Barrett, Korina Macatto.

Monday's matches
Seoul vs. Kubasaki, 9 a.m.
Kinnick vs. Kadena, 9 a.m.
Kadena vs. Seoul, noon
Kubasaki vs. ASJ, noon
Kadena vs. ASJ, 3 p.m.
Seoul vs. Kinnick, 3 p.m.

Tuesday's matches
Kinnick vs. ASJ, 9 a.m.
Kadena vs. Kubasaki, 9 a.m.
Kubasaki vs. Kinnick, noon
ASJ vs. Seoul, noon

Single-elimination playoffs
Tuesday
4 vs. 5, 3 p.m.
Semifinal: 2 vs. 3, 3 p.m.

Wednesday's matches
Semifinal: 1 vs. 4, 5 winner, 9 a.m.
Championship: Semifinal winners, 3 p.m.

Girls Division II

Dates — May 21-23
Sites — Camp Humphreys, South Korea.
Participating teams — Osan, Daegu, Humphreys, Perry, Yokota, Sacred Heart, E.J. King, Edgren, Zama, Christian Academy Japan.

Returning All-Far East players — Sacred Heart: Emily Yoshimura (two-time selection in 2015, 2017); Yokota: Regina Gama vs. Humphreys, 11 a.m.
Osan vs. King, 11 a.m.
Yokota vs. Daegu/D-II winner, 1 p.m.
CAJ vs. Sacred Heart/Edgren winner, 1 p.m.

Club experience fuels girls contenders

By DAVE ORNAUER

Stars and Stripes

Gaze up and down the rosters of the teams seen as the favorites in Far East Division I and II girls soccer tournaments and one will see an array of athletes who devote a vast part of the year playing off base in the Japanese club system.

Take Kadena seniors Adriana Gomez and Pamela Barrett. Gomez has 36 goals and Barrett a Pacific-leading 29 assists. They've played for Deigo FC off base and have helped the D-I Panthers to a 23-0 record and the title in last month's American School In Japan soccer festival.

Then there's D-II Yokota (25-1-1), the DODEA Japan tournament champion, which fields senior Regina Dukat (13 goals, 25 assists), junior Caleigh Garcia (32 goals, 18 assists) and freshman Sarah Schultz (11 goals). Schultz recently joined Tachikawa FC, for whom Dukat has played since she was 13. Garcia played club ball in the States.

“Playing year-round improves touch on the ball and greatly impacts and improves their soccer IQ,” Yokota coach Matt Whipple said.

“They're the ones who love

the game, and the more they play, the better they get and the more they love it,” Kadena coach Abe Summers said. “They bring more leadership, girls who know the fundamentals. And the other players then wish to aspire to that level.”

A vast number of other players matriculate on club teams during the off season and generally play only soccer year-round. Their talents will be on display next week at Camp Humphreys.

The tournament begin Monday. The D-I is a combined round-robin and single-elimination tournament while the D-II is a straight double-elimination event.

Other teams' records don't quite match up to Yokota's and Kadena's, but there are quite a few players with a vast amount of goals.

Among those are Maggie Donnelly (Pacific-high 37) and Ella Eisenhardt of defending D-I champion Kinnick; Kayesha McNeill (34) of Zama; Micayla Feltnet (28) of defending D-II champion Perry; and Kadena's Korina Macatto (21).

All have played club ball, which confers its qualitative advantages for both player and team, a handful of club veterans said.



DAVE ORNAUER/Stars and Stripes

Yokota senior Regina Dukat leads Division II in assists with 25 entering the Far East tournament.

“Your soccer thinking is definitely enhanced,” Dukat said. “Quicker reflexes, timing, thinking. The repetition is definitely there. Quicker one-touches, open passes, all this is drilled into your mind.”

“You learn to play more technical and with faster speeds,” Gomez said. “In addition, I learned that the team's success is much more important than the

individual.”
Kadena is seeking its third Far East D-II title since it became a small school in November 2014. Kadena, meanwhile, is looking to break a 12-year Far East D-I title drought.

“It's been a while. Too long,” Summers said. “This year, we have a good group of girls. Having so many seniors this year makes a difference.”

HIGH SCHOOL: FAR EAST TOURNAMENTS

Wide open the theme in softball

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

Ask a coach which team stands the best chance of winning the Far East softball tournaments next week at Naval Air Facility Atsugi and they'll say two words: Wide open.

"It's anybody's game this year," said McKinzy Best, coach of D-II E.J. King. "The teams are solid and competitive. You have to bring your 'A' game all the time. Everybody can hit, everybody can run. All the teams are well rounded."

What it might come down to is which team's pitcher might throw shutdown ball or have a batter (or two) who goes on a sudden tear. Or it might come down to one over-the-top ball that allows three runs to score in the title game.

"That can be any player," Best said. "One of them might come and hit or pitch that day. Whoever shows up and plays hard will win. Division II is just that even."

One player who went on such a streak is no stranger to the D-II stage. Brittany Crown is a two-time Far East D-II Most Outstanding Player, who pitched and batted Edgren to its first DODEA Japan tournament title the last two weeks of April.

Over that two-weekend span, Crown struck out 113 batters in eight games, 82 during the six-game DODEA Japan tournament. She also batted 3-for-4 with a double, triple and two RBIs and struck out 17 in the Eagles' 13-12 tie-clinching win over Yokota.

But, like any other player, Crown can't do it all by herself, says her coach Sarah Richardson, aiming for her first Far East tournament title of any kind; she also coaches basketball and volleyball.

"If she pitches the way she did at DODEA Japan," then we stand a chance. But she needs backup. Everybody needs to do their part, focusing on what they do. They have to swing the bat, they have to field, have no fear, do what they have to do and get her back."

Edgren gets its chance along with seven other D-II teams, including defending champion and host Zama. Defending Division I titlist Kinnick goes against four other teams starting Monday at NAF Atsugi.

The three-day D-I tournament features an almost-complete round-robin followed by single-elimination with consolation. The D-II tournament is straight double-elimination with consolation.

With Crown, Edgren would appear to be the D-II favorite.

Among teams that appear to have a shot, Perry has two solid arms in Olivia Reneau and Hailey Greulich. Defending champion Zama can hit top to bottom but is young on the mound, while Yokota has veteran arms in Jennifer Guets and Ashley Woodruff. Daegu sports transfer pitcher Bethani Newbold, who is also solid at the plate.

"Every team is hungry. Every



DAVE ORNAUER/Stars and Stripes

Brittany Crown is aiming to help Edgren win its first softball title.

team has a shot," Richardson said. "It's wide open. It depends on who shows up and wants it most."

Kinnick retains veteran right-hander Mariah Wimberly, but the Red Devils have a D-I co-favorite: Kubasaki, which downed Okinawa rival Kadena in the regular season and postseason series for the first time.

Olivia Witherow, who didn't pitch last year, came back from an MVP injury to lead the Dragons to a 5-1-1 mark against the Panthers.

Witherow said she believes the Dragons can compete for a school-first D-I title.

"We just have to work hard," she said. "We work hard every day, and the regular season and the districts proved we worked hard to get where we are."

ornauer.dave@starsandstripes.com
Twitter: @ornauer_strips

Scoreboard

Far East softball tournaments

May 21-23
Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan.
Division I

Participating teams — ASU, American Kubasaki, Kinnick, American School in Japan.

Returning All-Far East players — Kubasaki: Madison Richardson (two-time selection); Seoul American: Krista Bradley (2016 Gold Glove winner); ASU: Collette Macrons, So. Park.

Format — Round-robin, followed by modified double-elimination.

Monday's games

Kubasaki vs. ASU, 9 a.m.
Kinnick vs. Kadena, 10:30 a.m.

Seoul vs. Kubasaki, noon

ASU vs. Kinnick, 1:30 p.m.

Kadena vs. Seoul, 3 p.m.

Kubasaki vs. Kinnick, 4:30 p.m.

Kadena vs. ASU, 8 a.m.

Kinnick vs. Seoul, 8:30 a.m.

Double-elimination playoffs

Tuesday's games

4 v.s. 5, 11:30 a.m.

2 v.s. 3, 1 p.m.

1 v.s. 4/5 winner, 2:30 p.m.

4/5 loser vs. 2/3 loser, 4 p.m.

Division II

Participating teams — Yokota, Zama, Daegu, Perry, E.J. King, Daegu, Osan, Humphreys.

Returning All-Far East players — Edgren: Brittany Crown (two-time Most Outstanding Player); Yokota: Adriana Diaz; Daegu: Ariel Lofre; Humphreys: Kaeleen Castro.

Format — Round robin, followed by modified double-elimination with consolation.

Monday's games

Osan vs. Edgren, 8:30 a.m.

Humphreys vs. King, 8:30 a.m.

Osan vs. Perry, 10 a.m.

Zama vs. Yokota, 10 a.m.

King vs. Daegu, 11:30 a.m.

Edgren vs. Humphreys, 11:30 a.m.

Osan vs. Osan, 1 p.m.

Perry vs. Zama, 1 p.m.

Daegu vs. Perry, 2:30 p.m.

Humphreys vs. Yokota, 2:30 p.m.

Osan vs. Osa, 4 p.m.

Zama vs. King, 4 p.m.

Double-elimination playoffs

Tuesday's games

1 v.s. 8, 8 a.m.

4 v.s. 9, 8 a.m.

3 v.s. 6, 9 a.m.

2 v.s. 7, 9:30 a.m.

Hard to find ace in the hole

Pitching depth still at core for teams hoping to contend in baseball

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

A year ago, Frank Macias was enjoying the best of possible worlds for a baseball coach in a Far East tournament.

DODEA Pacific had implemented new pitch-count rules, the biggest one being no pitcher could throw more than 129 pitches (it's 125 this year) in the three-day tournament, nor could a pitcher throw in more than two games in one day of competition.

But back then, Macias was flush in ace pitchers, three of them, whose pitch counts and number of games he managed just right. And it helped lead Perry to its first Far East Division II title.

Fast-forward to the 2018 tournament. One of those aces, Peace Gates, graduated last June. Chad Schuch remains, but the senior is limited to DH duties because of an arm injury.

That leaves senior and two-time MVP Garrett Macias, the coach's son, as the only veteran arm on a team that begins defense of its championship Monday at the brand-new Kizuna Park, a few minutes outside Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni.

"It's going to be tough," said Macias, whose Samurai finished a pedestrian 8-10 this season. "Once the pitch count takes effect and teams lose their No. 1 pitchers, it gets difficult. But it is what it is."

The D-II tournament, like last year, is straight double-elimination, and the teams with the most quality pitchers stand the best chance of capturing titles.

The Division I tournament is at the Lombardo Field FourPlex on Yongsan Garrison's South Post, hosted by Seoul American, which in 2018-19 moves to D-II due to declining enrollment.

The D-I tourney has one minor change, an abbreviated round-robin schedule, each team playing three games instead of five, followed by a single-elimination bracket.

Absent the pitching cadre Macias had a season ago, it appears at least on paper that Yokota (25-8), the team the Samurai beat in the 2017 final and which won D-II titles in 2015-16, is back in the "team to beat" role, Macias and other D-II coaches said.

The Panthers have three pitchers with at least three wins, Troy Barnes, Riley DeMarco and Jack Winkler, and two others who've thrown at least 20 innings, Glen Willingham and Sean Caffrey. They're also 4-for-4 in save opportunities.

To best Yokota, one needs solid pitching, but "you also have to play good defense," Macias said. He tried some lineup changes the last two regular-season weekends against E.J. King "and we saw some positive results, but when we go up against the likes of Yokota, who knows?"

With 4-1 and 6-5 wins on May 2, Yokota also can claim the only



LUY SCHESSE/Special to Stripes

Senior right-hander Garrett Macias is the only one of three ace pitchers back to help Perry defend its Far East title. The Samurai start play in the Division II tournament on Monday.

two victories over American School in Japan, the consensus favorite to win its fifth straight Far East Division I title.

The Mustangs, 15-2 this season, enter Far East with a new head coach for the first time since the late 1970s. Aaron Rogers replaces the retired John Severs. ASU also returns reigning D-I Best Catcher Ian Donahue and infielder-pitcher Sho Flores, one of four pitchers who've thrown more than 11 innings. Ken Hemmer tops the staff with a 5-0 mark.

The change in round-robin format benefits all teams, Kadena coach Boe Roberts said, since there are two fewer games to play.

"You still have to pick which teams to go after and you still have to win games," said Roberts, whose Panthers are seeking their first D-I tournament title after coming up short in six visits to a final. "You try to save your arms, but you have to win or give up."

Kadena has two pitchers considered aces, Jared Duenas and Cody Sego, plus others who can eat some innings, Roberts said.

"You want to save those two aces," Roberts said. "And you have to hope to get run support and for the guys to play defense. Every little mistake extends games, and at that level, that's critical, since you're only taking 13 players."

ornauer.dave@starsandstripes.com
Twitter: @ornauer_strips

Scoreboard

Far East baseball tournaments

Division I
Dates — May 21-23
Site — Yongsan Garrison, South Korea.

Participating teams — St. Mary's, Kinnick, American School in Japan, Kubasaki, Kadena, Seoul American.

Returning All-Far East players — ASU: Ian Donahue, Sho Flores; Kadena: Cody Sego (two-time selection), Sam Jensen, Cody Chambers, Isaac Hostetler, Jared Duenas; Kinnick: Kacey Walker (three-time selection); Most Valuable Pitcher in 2015), Kai Smith, Patrick Kelly; Seoul: Logan Howell.

Format — Round-robin, followed by single-elimination with consolation.

Monday's games

Kubasaki vs. Kinnick, 9 a.m.

Seoul vs. ASU, 9 a.m.

Kadena vs. St. Mary's, 9 a.m.

Kadena vs. ASU, 11:30 a.m.

St. Mary's vs. Kubasaki, 11:30 a.m.

Kinnick vs. Seoul, 11:30 a.m.

Seoul vs. St. Mary's, 2 p.m.

ASU vs. Kubasaki, 2 p.m.

Single-elimination playoffs

Tuesday's games

4 v.s. 5, 9 a.m.

3 v.s. 6, 9 a.m.

Semifinals

1 v.s. 4/5 winner, 1 p.m.

2 v.s. 3 winner, 1 p.m.

Wednesday's games

Fifth place 9 a.m.

Third place 9 a.m.

Championship 1 p.m.

Division II

Dates — May 21-23

Site — Kizuna Park, Iwakuni, Japan.

Participating teams — Yokota, Edgren, Zama, Perry, E.J. King, Osan, Daegu, Humphreys.

Returning All-Far East players — Perry: Garrett Macias (three-time selection, reigning and 2015 Most Valuable Player); Yokota: Jack Winkler, Sean Caffrey, Daegu: Elijah Bembschewer, Zama: Josh Bayardo; Osa: Ryan Yi.

Format — Straight double-elimination with consolation.

Monday's games

Yokota vs. Osa, 11 a.m.

Perry vs. King, 9 a.m.

Daegu vs. Zama, 3 p.m.

Humphreys vs. Edgren, 1 p.m.

HIGH SCHOOL: FAR EAST TRACK AND FIELD

Balanced Kinnick favored for 4th D-I crown

Multiple Pacific record holders look to make mark at Far East meet

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

Talk to any member of Kinnick's track and field teams, athlete or coach, about what's made them so successful the past three-plus years — including three Far East Division I team titles — and they'll invoke one word: balance.

Up and down the lineup, the Red Devils can field as many as three athletes per event. And even when they're short of athletes in one discipline, coach Luke Voth has been able to call on people to step in and help out.

Take Erin Stonebarger, for example. The senior has been with Kinnick since it began its run of D-I titles and has been strongest in the 800, and teamed with fellow distance runners Taryn Cates-Beier and Rissa Ellmes in the 1,600 and 3,200.

But Voth was in need of a 300-meter hurdler at the start of the season. So, he tapped Stonebarger to do an event she hasn't performed since middle school, and the veteran has responded, placing third in two meets with a personal best of 51.43 seconds in the May 12 Kanto Finals.

"We have a deep team, [but] we didn't have a hurdler, so coach told me I had to do them," Stonebarger said. Her confidence shot up when she clocked 51.51 seconds in a meet on May 2 at Yokota. "I felt really happy about that, and I did the same at the Kanto Finals."

"She's one of the hardest workers I've ever had the privilege of coaching," Voth said. "Balance, hard work, consistency, sacrifice; kids want to be jumpers or sprinters only, but they realize that running [another event] will help the team. Things like that."

"It's where they take advantage over us, is their balance," said coach Doyle Robertson of Kadena, one of a handful of challengers to Kinnick's title throne.

That balance is one reason the Red Devils captured the team titles in the Kanto Finals and ran the table during the regular season, making them the favorite on paper to bring forth the D-I title.

Action begins at 10 a.m. Monday in the ninth Far East track meet with girls shot put and long jump and boys high jump and discus throw. The weather forecast is somewhat grim: cloudy skies on Monday and Tuesday. Wednesday serves as a rain day; rain is forecast for that morning.

Kinnick's lineup also features Kanto champion throwers Jade McGinnis, Kamron Leon Guerrero and Joshua Vitug, sprinters Isaiah Brown and Teanna Bellamy and jumper-sprinter Exotica Hall as well as the girls distance triad.

"It's a blessing to be on a team that is this talented and have coaches that can raise a team to be this good," Stonebarger said.

Despite such riches, Voth says



VAUGHN MEDENILLA/special to Stripes

Mumphreys junior high jumper Quintin Metcalf is one of a handful of athletes looking to set Pacific and Far East meet records.



DAVE ORNAUER/Stars and Stripes

Kubasaki senior Ja'Tavia Callier hopes to set a new Far East meet standard in the 100 hurdles. She already holds the Pacific record.

he won't count his chickens until after the conclusion of the 1,600 relay finals, Tuesday's last event.

"We're looking forward to it, to do the best we can," Voth said.

It will take individual athletes and teams "outperforming themselves" for a Kadena, Kubasaki or St. Mary's to overtake Kinnick, Robertson said. "They're looking really strong. We can at least make it close," he said. "Kubasaki's girls have a solid chance at the D-I title."

While Kinnick appears to be a runaway D-I favorite, the Division II title race could be much closer, according to one coach who admits to crunching numbers to see

what it will take to edge out the competition.

"It's going to come down to the athletes performing," said coach Ron Merrivether of Humphreys, whose boys won the first D-II banner in school history last spring.

"We can prepare [athletes] the best we can, but it will come down to who outperforms the others. You can crunch numbers all you want, but you can't see what the other coaches are doing. You have to outthink the competition. That's what makes it exciting."

Also making things exciting will be a handful of Pacific record holders now seeking Far East meet records.

■ Kubasaki senior Ja'Tavia Callier holds the Pacific record in the 100 hurdles, at 15.27 seconds, and hopes to top the meet record of 15.76. "Hard work, dedication, run my best race and not worry about who's running beside me," Callier said.

■ Seoul American senior Alyse Neal already holds the Far East and Pacific long-jump marks, 5.3 and 5.7, and that's despite not having a long-jump pit for practice. "You have to make do with what you have and hope for the best," Neal said.

■ Edgren senior Trinity Fiers broke the Pacific record in the discus with a 36.48 last month and seeks to top the meet mark of 33.88 set last year by her old teammate Brianna Hunter.

Others looking to break Pacific and Far East meet records include Kubasaki's Juan Guerrero and Humphreys' Quintin Metcalf, who are each within shouting distance of the high jump mark of 2 meters set in 2011 by Kadena's Lotty Smith during the Far East meet. Metcalf's best is 1.96 and Guerrero 1.93.

Scoreboard

Far East High School Track and Field meet

Site — Yokota Air Base, Japan.
Dates — May 21-23, 2018.
Defending champions — Division I, combined, Nile C. Kinnick, Japan; boys, American School in Japan; girls, Kinnick. Division II, combined, Zama, Japan; boys, Humphreys; girls, Zama.
Participating teams — Kinnick, Yokota, Zama, Edgren, Perry, Christian Academy Japan, St. Mary's (boys only), Seisen (girls only), Sacred Heart (girls only), ASU, Okinawa Christian, Zion Christian, Kadena, Kubasaki, Seoul American, Humphreys, Osan, Dagu.
Field events: boys discus, high jump; girls shot put, long jump, 100 m.
Girls 100 hurdles preliminaries, 11 a.m.
Girls 110 hurdles preliminaries, 11:15 a.m.
Girls 3,200 relay final, 11:30 a.m.
Boys 3,200 relay final, 11:45 a.m.
Girls 100 preliminaries, Noon.
Girls 400 preliminaries, Noon.
Boys 100 preliminaries, 12:15 p.m.
Boys 400 preliminaries, 12:30 p.m.
Girls 300 hurdles preliminaries, 2 p.m.
Boys 300 hurdles preliminaries, 2:15 p.m.
Girls 200 preliminaries, 2:30 p.m.

Boys 200 preliminaries, 2:45 p.m.
Girls 1,600 final, two heats, 3 p.m.
Boys 1,600 final, two heats, 3:20 p.m.
Tuesday
Field events: girls discus, high jump; boys shot put, long jump, 9:30 a.m.
Girls 100 hurdles D-I consolation and overall final, 11 a.m.
Boys 110 hurdles D-II consolation and overall final, 11:15 a.m.
Girls 400 D-I consolation and overall final, 1:30 p.m.
Boys 400 D-II consolation and overall final, 1:45 p.m.
Girls 400 relay final, 2 p.m.
Boys 400 relay final, 2:15 p.m.
Girls 200 D-I consolation and overall final, 3 p.m.
Boys 200 D-II consolation and overall final, 3:20 p.m.
Girls 400 D-I consolation and overall final, 3:45 p.m.
Boys 3,200 final, 4 p.m.
Girls 1,600 relay final, 4:20 p.m.
Boys 1,600 relay final, 4:30 p.m.

AUTO RACING

The young and the restless

IndyCar's next generation of potential stars ready to roll at Indianapolis 500

By MICHAEL MAROT
Associated Press

TWENTY-THREE-year-old Zach Veach looks like the perfect guy for IndyCar's youth movement.

He has a solid résumé. He has a full-time ride with one of the series' top teams, stable sponsorship and what appears to be a bright future. He understands the art of doing business and, in his first full-time season, he already sounds like a veteran.

If Veach succeeds, he could emerge as a cornerstone for the next generation of stars in the open-wheel series.

"It's exciting to be part of something like this," Veach said. "It's humbling, too, because you can be the front-runner in Indy Lights and you come over here and you have to learn some things."

Veach finished 19th at Barber and 26th at Indianapolis in his only two starts last season. This year, he finished 16th at the first two races, posted a career-best fourth at Long Beach and was 23rd in the 24-car field at the IndyCar Grand Prix.

Series officials don't necessarily need Veach to jump to the forefront just yet. They're not going all in on one guy, either.

It's possible more than 20 percent of this year's Indianapolis 500 starters could be,

like Veach, younger than 25. The class is rich in diversity and talent:

■ Gabby Chaves, a 24-year-old Colombian, fended off Veach to claim the 2014 Indy Lights title. He competes with upstart Harding Racing.

■ Ed Jones, the 23-year-old from Dubai, was last year's rookie of the year driver for powerhouse Chip Ganassi Racing.

■ Kyle Kaiser, a 22-year-old Californian, was hired by Juncos Racing after winning last year's Indy Lights title.

■ Matheus Leist, a 19-year-old Brazilian, won last year's Freedom 100 at Indy and now is being mentored by 2014 series champion Tony Kanaan at A.J. Foyt Racing.

■ Pietro Pittipaldi, a 21-year-old Brazilian, will miss the Indy 500 after breaking his left leg and right ankle during qualifying for the World Endurance Championship. On Saturday, Dale Coyne Racing used 20-year-old Zachary Claman De Melo as the replacement.

■ American Sage Karam, 23 and the 2013 Indy Lights winner, has shown promise in a variety of series but

still hasn't secured a full-time ride in IndyCar. He is attempting to make his fifth 500 start with Dreyer & Reinbold Racing.

Veterans of the series believe this group has a better chance of making an impact together than previously-hyped classes.

"We've got good, quality guys under 25 and now they're driving for owners who hopefully will stick with them because that's how I think that's what develops them," Ganassi Racing executive director Mike Hull said. "I think the crop you're talking about is the crop we've needed for a long, long time but we didn't have the stability to do that. Now, we do."

Jay Frye, IndyCar president of competition and operations, is a big believer in the young guys. He called this group "advanced" in terms of their experience and business savvy.

The problem, of course, becomes marketing.

In a sport where winning matters, big names rule, and sponsorship money is increasingly more difficult to find and keep, the biggest challenge might be finding teams and companies that are pa-

tient enough to stick with a young guy long enough to reap the rewards.

Hull estimates it takes about three years for most drivers to become consistently competitive in IndyCar.

"I'm not expecting to come in and win races right off the bat with a new car and a new team," Kaiser said. "It just takes time and experience. Nothing trumps experience."

Except actually winning.

The driver with the most at stake this month may be Karam, whose only scheduled race this season is the May 27 Indianapolis 500. Qualifying is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday.

"The hardest part is when you're not a full-time driver and you don't have a resume to show sponsors you can do well," Karam said. "So this is a game everyone sees. If I win, it would be a game-changer and you'd see a lot more of me."

Perhaps the greatest asset in this young class is their determination to deliver on the promise.

"We all root for the young guys because we know hard it is to get here and how hard it is to stay here," Veach said. "The business side has to be taken very seriously. When you're young, you have to find a way to present yourself in a mature way to get the meetings you need to get. It's not the '90s any more where you can rely on talent."

From left: Gabby Chaves, Ed Jones and Zach Veach

Photos courtesy of IndyCar



HORSE RACING



MATT SLOCUM/AP

Cloud Computing, left, leads Classic Empire to win the 142nd Preakness Stakes at Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore last year. Pimlico is gussied up again, ready to host the Preakness on a day that will enable the 148-year-old track to survive another year. But the track is showing its age, and it will cost an estimated \$300 million to make it right.

Preakness' future at Pimlico uncertain

2020 race could be relocated to nearby Laurel Park

By DAVID GINSBURG
Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Pimlico Race Course is all gussied up again this week, ready to host the Preakness on a day that will enable the 148-year-old track to survive another year.

Old Hilltop is showing its age, however, and it will cost more than a quarter-billion dollars to make it right. So while the group that owns and operates Pimlico promises the middle jewel of the Triple Crown will stay put through next year, there's a chance that the 145th running of the Preakness in 2020 will be held within the state at newer, fresher Laurel Park.

Much depends on an ongoing study by the Maryland Stadium Authority. The initial phase of the investigation determined that it would cost between \$250 million and \$320 million to renovate Pimlico. The second phase of the study is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

"By then, we should know what the future holds," said Tim Ritvo, chief operating officer of the Stronach Group, which owns Pimlico and Laurel Park.

Pimlico — and the Stronach Group — could get a shot in the arm from the Supreme Court ruling Monday that would allow states to legalize sports betting.

"We are already looking at opportunities where we can put sports books in our properties in Maryland," Ritvo said. "It's an

added amenity for a customer at an already existing gambling establishment."

Hall of Fame trainer D. Wayne Lukas believes that's a viable option.

"You might be surprised who would show up here to bet sports," the 82-year-old Lukas said while sitting outside the stakes barn on Tuesday. "In Maryland, if sports betting and horse racing can hold hands on an agreement on a contract, this thing might turn around a little bit."

But if sports betting is legalized in Maryland, it will take a while — possibly even too long to address Pimlico's needs. Maryland would need to approve a state constitutional amendment and legislators balked at passing a bill this year to put it on the ballot in November.

That stalemate was largely due to disagreements about who should be allowed to have sports betting — casinos and/or horse racing tracks. There was also concern that not a huge amount of money was at stake in the short term.

So, unless legislators hold a special session between now and November to put it on the ballot — legalized sports betting won't happen in Maryland until at least 2020.

Lukas, who has won the Preakness six times and has two entrants in Saturday's race, shook his head when asked about the prospect of moving the race.

"I would be really, really disap-

pointed if they did," Lukas said. "This is an awfully good facility for that day. I know the grandstand is old and everything, but everybody has a good time here. It's a fixture in Baltimore, that's for sure."

The Preakness drew a record crowd of 140,327 last year, and the Black-Eyed Susan card one day earlier attracted 50,339.

But on most days, the horses at Pimlico run before a smattering of fans. This year's Preakness is the highlight of a meager 12-day meet of live racing.

Back in its heyday, Pimlico hosted many of the sport's most memorable races: Seabiscuit's match race with War Admiral in 1938; Man o' War's debut in 1920 with a stunning win over Upset; and Secretariat's last-to-first victory during his Triple Crown run in 1973.

But that was a long time ago. There may not be enough paint, concrete and bricks to give Pimlico the makeover it sorely needs. Though work crews have found a way to make the track presentable every year on the third Saturday in May, the best course of action just might be to tear it down and build it over from the ground up.

"What we're doing is underserving the customer at the Preakness in the venue we're in right now," Ritvo said. "One way or another, we either need a new facility that can accommodate such a special event, or we need to move it eventually. Not because



PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

Paint peels from a support beam in a seating area at Pimlico Race Course as preparations take place Tuesday for the Preakness.

it's a money-grab for the Stronach Group. What it is about is creating an environment for year-round racing."

A few years ago, Pimlico hosted a live card on Kentucky Derby day, but more people showed up at Laurel to bet on simulcast races, Ritvo noted.

"Most Fortune 500 companies would run the Preakness for two days and leave, say it's a great event and it's profitable," Ritvo said. "But being the stewards of this event, we have to look at what it's going to be 100 years down the road."

Toward that end, the Stronach Group is looking at Laurel Park — located 29 miles south of Pimlico — as a viable option.

"We've had discussions of what it would be like at Laurel, but not in detail," Ritvo said. "There are lots of options at Laurel. Our focus at Laurel was to continue to im-

prove the facility for year-round racing, and then also to host a Breeders' Cup there very soon."

Under state law, the race can be moved to another track in Maryland "only as a result of a disaster or emergency."

Ritvo knows the law, and he isn't looking to create issues.

"The truth of the matter is, we don't want to be disruptive or fight with anyone," he said. "The Preakness is always going to be a Maryland event. And if Laurel someday is a better location, more profitable and makes more sense and works, we hope the state would see that and understand it."

"There's going to be a large investment needed to rebuild Pimlico. We're not asking for them to do that, but if they want to do that and have that in the core of their heart, then we're willing to listen."

HORSE RACING/SPORTS BRIEFS

Justify is early Preakness favorite

Kentucky Derby winner Justify has been made the heavy favorite for the Preakness and will break from the No. 7 post in the eight-horse field for the second leg of the Triple Crown.

POST
POSITION

Opening
odds

Horse	1	2	3	4
Trainer	Rodolphe Brisset	Thomas Amoss	D. Wayne Lucas	John Servis
Jockey	Florent Geroux	Irad Ortiz Jr.	Luis Contreras	Javier Castellano
Odds	12-1	15-1	30-1	30-1
Horse	5	6	7	8
Trainer	Chad Brown	Steve Asmussen	Bob Baffert	D. Wayne Lucas
Jockey	Jose Ortiz	Ricardo Santana Jr.	Mike Smith	Luis Saez
Odds	3-1	20-1	1-2	20-1

Weights: 126 each • **Distance:** 1 3-16 miles • **Purse:** \$1,500,000 • **First place:** \$900,000
Second place: \$300,000 • **Third place:** \$165,000 • **Post time:** 6:48 p.m. EDT

NOTE: Numbers listed are post positions, which may differ from program numbers

SOURCE: Marylandracing.com

Favorite: Trainer Baffert 4-0 with Derby winners at Preakness Stakes

FROM BACK PAGE

"I like being the favorite," Baffert said Wednesday. "I don't want to be 50-1. I like knowing that I have a chance to win. When you come in and you're like, 'Well, I don't know, we're going to need the Stanford marching band to interfere a little bit,' then you don't feel that well. I just feel that when you know that there's a chance you can pull this off and when you can win on the big arena, that's what it's all about."

Justify already won on horse racing's biggest stage when he held off a hard-charging Good Magic to capture the Derby on a muddy track at Churchill Downs. Rain is expected at Pimlico Race Course in the days leading up to the Preakness and on race day, which could set up a similar scenario to how jockey Mike Smith took Justify out to the lead before the final turn and pulled away.

"I think it's less pressure for us because the Kentucky Derby, for me, it was so special," Baffert said. "Coming in here I feel the same as I did when I won it with the other ones."

Baffert won the Derby and Preakness with Silver Charm in 1997, Real Quiet in 1998, War Emblem in 2002 and American Pharoah three years ago.

Justify will face three other challengers from the Derby — Good Magic, Lone Sailor and Bravazo — and four horses who skipped it to point to the Preakness — Quip, Tenfold, Sporting

Did you know

Kentucky Derby winner Justify got acquainted with the track at Pimlico Race Course on Thursday, where he will attempt to keep his Triple Crown hopes alive Saturday. Justify showed no signs of being troubled by the heel bruise that was discovered the day after he won the Derby.

SOURCE: Associated Press

Chance and Diamond King.

After Justify and Good Magic, No. 1 Quip is third at 12-1. No. 2 Lone Sailor is 15-1, No. 6 Tenfold and No. 8 Bravazo are 20-1 and No. 3 Sporting Chance and No. 4 Diamond King are 30-1 on the morning line.

If Justify runs his best race, the rest of the field could be running for second place. "He's the best horse," said D. Wayne Lukas, who trains Bravazo and Sporting Chance. "He looks terrific, he's doing well. I watched him all week. He's going to be very, very hard

to handle."

Quip is the new shooter best positioned to give Justify a run after winning the Tampa Bay Derby. Elliott Walden of WinStar Farm, who co-owns Justify and Quip, showed his allegiance at the draw by wearing a "Justify" hat and hopes the favorite wins for obvious reasons.

"It would point him toward the Triple Crown," Walden said. "But if for some reason he stubs his toe, we feel real good about Quip's chances to be the horse to upset him, if that happens."

The odds are against it.

Dodgers struggling against NL's worst

By STEVEN WINE
Associated Press

MIAMI — Los Angeles Dodgers manager Dave Roberts leaned back in his chair and it did not collapse, which is surprising given the way the season has gone.

The defending NL champions had just endured one of their six consecutive defeats through Wednesday, against last-place teams. The two most recent losses came in Miami, and Roberts contemplated his team's place in the universe, which includes the same 16-26 record as the Marlins, baseball's perennial punch line.

"I need a Presidente," he said, before pausing to reconsider. "I need more than one."

Here's a toast to the most disappointing team in the majors. The Dodgers began the season with expectations to match their high payroll, but they've been bad and getting worse. Since May 5, they are 0-8 against the Marlins, Reds and Padres, the NL's cellar-dwellers.

On Tuesday the Dodgers failed to score against Miami starter Wei-Yin Chen, who entered with a 10.22 ERA. On Wednesday, they scored one run against Eliaser Hernandez, a Rule 5 pickup making his first career start.

After winning 104 games in 2017, the Dodgers are on pace for 100 losses.

"This is testing every bit of fight you have," Roberts said. "This is a stretch I'm sure a lot of these

'This is testing every bit of fight you have.'

Dave Roberts
Los Angeles Dodgers manager

guys haven't gone through."

Actually, the Dodgers had an awful stretch just last summer, when they lost 16 of 17. But that felt different because they were 91-36 when the swoon began.

They responded to reach Game 7 of the World Series, and with most of their roster back, expected to be one win better in 2018. Instead, too many injuries and sickly swings threaten to derail the season.

"It's not fun," catcher Austin Barnes said. "Every day it seems like there's something not clicking. It is absolutely frustrating."

The Dodgers are accustomed to coming up short — they haven't won the World Series since 1988. But sub-.500 is something different for a franchise that has won five consecutive NL West titles.

"It's baseball; it's a tough game," All-Star third baseman Justin Turner said. "It doesn't matter what it says on paper. You've got to show up and play nine innings and 27 outs, and anything can happen. Any team on any given day can go out and win a game. That's the beauty of it. It's not the NBA, where the best team on paper wins all the games."

Scoreboard

American League						Thursday's games					
East Division						West Division					
W	L	Pct	W	L	Pct	W	L	Pct	W	L	Pct
New York	28	12	.700	Houston	28	17	.622	Baltimore	26	16	.619
Toronto	22	21	.512	Los Angeles	21	28	.431	Pompano Beach	24	16	.600
Tampa Bay	19	22	.463	Seattle	24	18	.571	Cleveland	24	17	.588
Baltimore	13	29	.310	Oakland	22	28	.438	Milwaukee	20	23	.467
Central Division						Friday's games					
Cleveland	21	21	.500	Atlanta	26	16	.619	(Estrada 2-3)			
Minnesota	18	21	.462	Philadelphia	24	18	.571	(Cobb 0-5)			
Detroit	19	23	.452	Washington	20	19	.513	(Pomeranz 1-1)			
Kansas City	13	30	.302	New York	20	29	.411	Cleveland (Clevinger 3-0)			
Chicago	10	29	.256	Miami	16	26	.381	(Gallardo 1-2)			
West Division						Saturday's games					
Houston	28	17	.622	Pittsburgh	25	18	.581	Milwaukee (Suter 2-3)			
Los Angeles	21	28	.431	Chicago	22	22	.500	(Taxes 1-1)			
Seattle	24	18	.571	Cincinnati	15	29	.341	Texas (Fister 1-4)			
Oakland	22	28	.438	Arizona	20	23	.467	(Felix 1-0)			
Texas	17	27	.386	Colorado	23	20	.535	(Felix 1-0)			
National League						Sunday's games					
East Division						West Division					
W	L	Pct	W	L	Pct	W	L	Pct	W	L	Pct
Atlanta	26	16	.619	San Francisco	22	22	.500	San Francisco	19	24	.444
Philadelphia	24	16	.600	San Diego	22	22	.500	San Francisco	19	24	.444
Washington	20	19	.513	Los Angeles	16	26	.381	San Francisco	19	24	.444
New York	20	29	.411	Arizona	20	23	.467	San Francisco	19	24	.444
Miami	16	26	.381	Colorado	23	20	.535	San Francisco	19	24	.444
Central Division						Monday's games					
Pittsburgh	25	18	.581	San Francisco	22	22	.500	San Francisco	19	24	.444
Chicago	22	18	.556	San Diego	22	22	.500	San Francisco	19	24	.444
Cincinnati	15	29	.341	Los Angeles	16	26	.381	San Francisco	19	24	.444
West Division						Tuesday's games					
Arizona	20	23	.467	San Francisco	22	22	.500	San Francisco	19	24	.444
Colorado	23	20	.535	San Diego	22	22	.500	San Francisco	19	24	.444
San Francisco	22	22	.500	Los Angeles	16	26	.381	San Francisco	19	24	.444
St. Louis	17	27	.386	Arizona	20	23	.467	San Francisco	19	24	.444
San Diego	22	22	.500	Colorado	23	20	.535	San Francisco	19	24	.444
Los Angeles	16	26	.381	San Francisco	22	22	.500	San Francisco	19	24	.444
National League						Wednesday's games					
N.Y. Yankees	at Washington, pxd.					N.Y. Yankees	at Washington, pxd.				
Philadelphia	at Baltimore, pxd.					Philadelphia	at Baltimore, pxd.				
Pittsburgh	at Chicago White Sox 2.					Pittsburgh	at Chicago White Sox 2.				
St. Louis	at Detroit.					St. Louis	at Detroit.				
Toronto	at St. Louis 7.					Toronto	at St. Louis 7.				
Los Angeles	at Kansas City 3.					Los Angeles	at Kansas City 3.				
Texas	at Seattle 1.					Texas	at Seattle 1.				
Los Angeles	at Oakland 4.					Los Angeles	at Oakland 4.				
Houston	at L.A. Angels 0.					Houston	at L.A. Angels 0.				
Cincinnati	at San Francisco 3.					Cincinnati	at San Francisco 3.				
Miami	at L.A. Dodgers 5.					Miami	at L.A. Dodgers 5.				
Atlanta	at Chicago 1.					Atlanta	at Chicago 1.				
Chicago	at St. Louis 1.					Chicago	at St. Louis 1.				
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NHL PLAYOFFS

Marchessault leads Knights to win again

By W.G. RAMIREZ
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Jonathan Marchessault vowed after the Golden Knights' morning skate to come out swinging in Game 3 of the Western Conference final, looking to avoid a back-and-forth affair with the Winnipeg Jets.

He didn't disappoint.

For the second straight game, Marchessault scored two goals—including one just 35 seconds into the game—to lead Vegas to a 4-2 victory Wednesday night, helping the expansion Golden Knights to a 2-1 series lead.

Vegas, two wins from advancing to the Stanley Cup final, improved to 5-1 at home in the playoffs and host Game 4 on Friday night.

"We worked all year to get in a position like that," Marchessault said. "We definitely can't take it for granted. They got to come out like their season's on the line, so we've got to be ready to push back and get some energy off the crowd."

Marchessault added an empty-net goal with 3 seconds left, becoming the first player in league history to score in the first and last 60 seconds of the same Stanley Cup playoff game, according to the NHL. He leads Vegas with 17 points (eight goals, nine assists) in the postseason, and needs two goals to tie the NHL record for the most by a player in his club's first postseason appearance.

James Neal and Alex Tuch also scored for Vegas, while Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 33 shots.

Mark Scheifele scored both of Winnipeg's goals and has a playoff-leading 14 goals in 15 postseason games. Connor Hellebuyck had 26 saves for the Jets, who arrived in Las Vegas having outscored their opposition 23-15 in road games during their playoffs.

"A few misuses and they made me pay for it; that can't happen," Scheifele said. "We can't suck on this too long. We've got to pick ourselves up tomorrow and be ready for a big game on Friday."

Fleury tickled by Game 3

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Marc-Andre Fleury gave Blake Wheeler quite an earful.

During a scrum behind Vegas' net with 2:34 left in the second period of the Golden Knights' 4-2 victory over Winnipeg on Wednesday night, Fleury reached over with his left hand and tickled the left ear of the Jets' unsuspecting Blake Wheeler.

"I did that?" said a playful Fleury, who also made 33 saves in the win. "There's cameras everywhere."

There sure is—and video of the ear tickle quickly became a big hit on social media.

"I was just sitting there and people, they were fighting," Fleury said, "[and I was] trying to have a little smile by myself. That was Wheeler, whose helmet was off

Scheifele is correct, with history against the Jets, who are trailing in a series for the first time this postseason. Teams with a 2-1 lead in the conference final (or NHL semifinals) have won the series 35 of 43 times (81.4 percent) since 1975.

"That's an important challenge," Jets coach Paul Maurice said. "We're going to have to be able to handle that. It would be rare that you lead the series straight through. We want to make sure we deal with our loss, don't carry it too heavily and then come up with our finest game of the post-season."

The problem for Winnipeg is stopping a Golden Knights team that is finally seeing production from the depth of its lineup.

While Marchessault got things going early to give the Golden Knights a 1-0 lead, their second line of Neal, Tuch and Erik Haula continued to heat up.

After Scheifele tied the game in the second period, Neal answered 12 seconds later after Haula dishd a perfect pass to give the Knights a 2-1 lead. Tuch notched his fifth goal of the playoffs after Neal fed him with a nifty pass from behind the net.

"They played on the road trip, they just didn't have many chances to score and I thought they were more involved in the offense and they were skating, and they played really well," Vegas coach Gerard Gallant said about his second line.

Scheifele's second goal of the game 18 seconds into the third seemingly sparked the Jets, but they couldn't solve Fleury, who made several huge saves late in the game to preserve Vegas' lead.

After stonewalling Tyler Myers' breakaway attempt with 11:50 left in the game, he stymied Scheifele's back-to-back shot with 9:30 remaining. Less than two minutes later, he smothered the puck with a slew of players piled near the crease.

"He's made unbelievable saves," Gallant said of Fleury. "They were obviously important at a key time for us. That's Fleury. He's been great all playoffs, he's been great all year for us. He's a guy that has fun out there. I'm sweating on the bench yelling my head off and I look down there and he's



DAVID BECKER/AP

Vegas Golden Knights center Jonathan Marchessault scores past Winnipeg Jets goaltender Connor Hellebuyck during the first period of Game 3 of the Western Conference finals on Wednesday in Las Vegas.

just having fun."

Winnipeg pulled Hellebuyck with 1:03 left, but Marchessault's empty-netter with 3 seconds left sealed the win.

"I didn't imagine it in October and November, but come around January, we knew we had a good hockey team," Gallant said. "I didn't know if we'd go this far right now, but I knew we had (as good) a chance as anybody else. Early January, around the All-Star game, I was a strong believer in our team. I knew we were going to battle well, compete well and no one was going to push us over, that's for sure."

Notes: The Jets had scored a power-play goal in 11 of the 13 playoff games, but

was 0-for-2 with a man advantage in this one. ... Winnipeg hadn't lost back-to-back games during the playoffs. The last time it dropped consecutive games was a three-game losing streak (0-3-1) from March 10-13. ... The Golden Knights welcomed the family of Humboldt Broncos head coach and GM Darren Haugan, wife Christina and children Carson and Jackson. ... With his two goals, Scheifele now owns the NHL record for most goals scored on the road in a single playoffs with 11, surpassing Sidney Crosby and Joe Mullen, each with 10.

Up next: Game 4 is Friday night in Las Vegas.

Scoreboard

Conference finals

(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)
EASTERN CONFERENCE
Washington 2, Tampa Bay 1
Washington 4, Tampa Bay 2
Washington 6, Tampa Bay 2
Tampa Bay 4, Washington 2
Thursday: at Washington
Saturday: at Tampa Bay, **AFN-Atlantic:**
1:15 a.m. Sunday CET; 8:15 a.m., JKT.
x-Monday: at Washington
WESTERN CONFERENCE
x-Wednesday, May 23: at Tampa Bay
x-Thursday, May 24: at Winnipeg
Winnipeg 4, Vegas 2
Vegas 3, Winnipeg 1
Wednesday: Vegas 4, Winnipeg 2
Friday: at Vegas, **AFN-Sports:** 2 a.m.
Saturday CET: 9 a.m. **Saturday JKT:**
Sunday: at Winnipeg, **AFN-Sports:** 9 p.m. Sunday CET; 4 a.m. Monday JKT.
x-Tuesday: at Vegas
x-Thursday, May 24: at Winnipeg

Wednesday

Golden Knights 4, Jets 2

Winnipeg 0 11-2
Vegas 4 12-4
First Period—1. Vegas, Marchessault 7 (McNabb) 0:35.
Second Period—2. Winnipeg, Scheifele 13 (Wheeler), 5:28. 3, Vegas, Neal 4 (Haula), 5:40. 4, Vegas, Tuch 5 (Schmidt, Neal), 8:13.
Third Period—5. Winnipeg, Scheifele 14 (Wheeler, Connor), 0:18. 6, Vegas, Marchessault 8 (McNabb, Fleury), 19:57.
Shots on Goal—Winnipeg 31; Vegas—35.
Vegas 10-12=30.
Power-play—Winnipeg 0 of 2; Vegas 0 of 2.
Goals—Winnipeg, Hellebuyck 9-6 (29 shots-26 saves). Vegas, Fleury 10-33 (33).
A—18,477 (17,367). T—2:40.



DAVID BECKER/AP

Golden Knights goalie Marc-Andre Fleury blocks the puck against the Jets on Wednesday in Las Vegas.

and had his back to the goalie, somehow seemed unfazed by the, well, "earry" feeling.

The Jets forward, who was draped over the back of the net,

didn't even turn to look behind him to see who was responsible for the tickle as he continued yapping at Vegas players while getting himself back onto his skates.

The Golden Knights host Game 4 on Friday.

Oh, and Wheeler might want to keep his ears clear of Fleury's frolicking fingers.

NBA PLAYOFFS



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

Rockets guard Eric Gordon, right, drives around Warriors forward Draymond Green during the second half in Game 2 of the Western Conference Finals on Wednesday in Houston.

Rockets rout Warriors

By KRISTIE RIEKEN
Associated Press

HOUSTON — The Houston Rockets were the best team in the NBA in the regular season.

They played like it Wednesday night, using a balanced scoring attack to rout the Golden State Warriors 127-105 and even the Western Conference finals at one game apiece.

James Harden and Eric Gordon each scored 27 points on a night Houston had five players score 16 points or more.

"We can beat anybody, anywhere at any time playing the way we play," coach Mike D'Antoni said.

The Rockets didn't trail after the first quarter and led by double digits for most of the night. They head to Oakland, Calif., for Game 3 on Sunday night feeling much better after rebounding from a deflating 119-106 loss in the series opener.

P.J. Tucker added a playoff career-high 22 and Trevor Ariza had 19 as both bounced back after struggling in Game 1. Tucker had just one point in that game and Ariza scored eight, but was limited on defense after collecting his fifth foul early in the third quarter.

"I never worry about my offense ... it's all on defense," Tucker said. "If we get stops we'll be able to run. It changes the game

and it changes the way we play and we know that."

Kevin Durant had 38 points after scoring 37 in the opener, but Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson combined for just 24 points after the pair went for 46 in Game 1.

Houston wasn't able to slow down Durant, but did a much better job of limiting open three-pointers by Thompson and Curry, and the two made just 3 of 12 attempts.

"They were desperate tonight and played like it, and we weren't and it showed," Golden State coach Steve Kerr said.

The Warriors made three free throws to get within 11 early in the fourth quarter before the Rockets scored the next 11 points, with threes from Gordon, Tucker and Harden to make it 111-89 with about 6½ minutes to play.

Durant made a basket after that, but Houston scored the next eight points to extend the lead to 119-91 with about five minutes left.

The Warriors got frustrated in that stretch, with Durant getting a technical for showing Harden in the back and Draymond Green pushing Ariza out of bounds seconds later. It was then that Kerr sent all of his starters to the bench for good.

Gordon came off the bench to make six three-pointers, Tucker tied a playoff best with five and Harden added three.

"They were more settled to-night and they hit timely shots," Durant said. "The first quarter was still the most important part of the game. Eric Gordon hit two big threes and that kind of settled them in. Those shots did it for them."

Houston avoided losing consecutive games for the first time this postseason and the Warriors lost in the second game of a playoff series for the first time since the 2015 NBA Finals, snapping a 10-game winning streak in such games.

"We got outplayed the whole game ... we got it handed to us," Kerr said. "You can look at it any way you want ... and parcel it out, but it didn't matter who we had out there tonight we got beat."

Houston led by as many as 19 in the first half and was up 64-50 at halftime. The Warriors cut it to 74-64 with five quick points from Durant, but the Rockets opened it back up to 89-72 when Gordon made an off-balance layup before crashing to the court while being fouled and made the free throw.

The Rockets were up by 16 to start the fourth quarter but Golden State got within 98-86 with about 10 minutes left. Curry had five points in that span, including his first three after missing his first six attempts of the night.

Curry finished with 16 points and Thompson was 3-for-11 for his eight points.

Scoreboard

Conference finals

(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)

Eastern Conference

Boston 2, Cleveland 0

Boston 108, Cleveland 83
Boston 107, Cleveland 94
Saturday at Cleveland. **AFN-Sports:**
2:30 a.m. Sunday CET; 9:30 a.m. Sunday JKT.

Monday at Cleveland. **AFN-Sports:**
2:30 a.m. Tuesday, CET; 9:30 a.m., JKT.
x-Wednesday, May 23; at Boston
x-Friday, May 25; at Cleveland

x-Saturday, May 26; at Boston
Western Conference
Golden State 1, Houston 1

Golden State 119, Houston 106
Wednesday: Houston 127, Golden State 105

Sunday at Golden State. **AFN-Sports:**
2:30 a.m. Monday, CET; 9:30 a.m., JKT.
Tuesday at Golden State
Thursday, May 24; at Houston

x-Saturday, May 26; at Golden State
x-Monday, May 28; at Houston

Wednesday

Rockets 127, Warriors 105

GOLDEN STATE — Igoudala 2-4 1-2 5, Durant 13-22 9-9 38, D.Green 2-5 2-2 6, Curry 7-19 1-1 16, Thompson 5-11 0-0 8, Bell 0-2 1-1 1, West 2-4 0-0 4, Looney 2-4 0-0 4, Pachulia 2-2 1-2 5, Cook 2-3 2-2 7, Livingston 2-3 1-2 5, Young 2-6 0-0 6. Totals 39-85 18-22 105.

HOUSTON — 9-14 4-19, Tucker 8-9 1-2 22, Capela 2-3 1-5 5, Paul 6-14 3-16, Harden 9-24 6-6 27, Black 1-2 0-0 2, Mbat 1-5 0-0 2, Anderson 0-0 0-0 4, Jackson 2-3 0-0 4, Johnson 0-2 0-0 0, Gordon 8-15 5-5 27, G.Green 1-2 1-2 3. Totals 46-88 21-27 127.

Golden State 21 29 26-105
26 38 31 22-127
Three-point goals—Golden State 9-30 (Durant 3-7, Thompson 2-4, Young 2-6, Cook 1-2, Curry 1-8, Igoudala 0-1, D.Green 0-2), Houston 16-42 (Gordon 6-9, Tucker 5-6, Harden 3-15, Ariza 1-3, Paul 1-5, Johnson 0-1, G.Green 0-1, Mbat 1-5, 0-1, Jackson 0-1). Fouled out—None. Rebounds—Golden State 36 (Curry 7), Houston 47 (Harden, Capela 10). Assists—Golden State 21 (Curry 7), Houston 23 (Ariza, Paul 6). Total Fouls—Golden State 22, Houston 24. Technicals—Durant. A.—18,119 (18,695).

By GENARO C. ARMAS
Associated Press

A person familiar with the search tells The Associated Press that the Milwaukee Bucks have reached an agreement with Mike Budenholzer to become the team's next coach.

The 2015 NBA Coach of the Year will replace Joe Prunty, the former assistant who went 21-16 in the regular season after replacing the fired Jason Kidd in late January.

The person confirmed the agreement with the former Atlanta Hawks coach on Wednesday. The person requested anonymity because the team has not made an official announcement.

The deal was first reported by ESPN.

The Bucks lost to Boston in seven games in the first round of the playoffs.

Budenholzer went 213-197 in five seasons with the Hawks, leading them to a franchise-record 60 wins and the Eastern Conference finals in 2015. He and the Hawks mutually agreed to part ways last month with two years remaining on his contract, allowing Budenholzer to pursue other opportunities.

The one with the Bucks may have been the best available, thanks to All-Star forward Giannis Antetokounmpo and a new arena next season.

"There's a massive amount of excitement around this team, because of the arena right there, because of this facility, because or our team," general manager Jon Horst said recently from the Bucks' training facility located across the street from the new arena.

"I think a coaching hire just adds to the momentum that we have as an organization, particularly if it's the right person and it helps us win the way that we expect to win."



MICHAEL Dwyer/AP

A person familiar with the search tells The Associated Press that the Milwaukee Bucks have reached agreement with former Atlanta Hawks coach Mike Budenholzer to become the team's next coach. The 2015 NBA Coach of the Year will replace Joe Prunty, the assistant who went 21-16 in the regular season after replacing the fired Jason Kidd in late January.

The Bucks took a small step forward this season after winning 44 games, two better than last year, when they lost to Toronto in six games in the first round.

Before choosing Budenholzer, the Bucks also considered Spurs assistant Becky Hammon, who would have been the first woman to coach an NBA team, and interviewed former Cavaliers coach David Blatt, former Hornets coach Steve Clifford, and current Spurs vice

president and former Pelicans coach Monty Williams.

"Xs and Os matter, you want someone who has a high basketball IQ, a high human IQ, a high character person, someone who's a great communicator," Horst said about some of the qualities he was seeking in the next coach.

Budenholzer was a longtime assistant to Gregg Popovich in San Antonio before taking the Atlanta job.

SPORTS



Golden boy

Knights' Marchessault scores twice
in win over Jets » **NHL playoffs, Page 62**

HORSE RACING

Justify my love

Derby winner draws 7 post, is
heavy favorite for Preakness

By STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

BALTIMORE

Having the Preakness favorite has never bothered Bob Baffert before, and it doesn't bother him with Justify.

Coming off an impressive victory in the Kentucky Derby, Justify is the 1-2 morning-line favorite for Saturday's second race in a field of eight horses. Derby runner-up Good Magic is the second choice at 3-1, but Justify is the horse to beat with the chance to give Baffert his seventh Preakness winner and a shot at a second Triple Crown in four years after American Pharoah did it in 2015.

Baffert is 4-0 in the Preakness with the Derby winner and doesn't see any reason Justify doesn't have another big run in him.

SEE FAVORITE ON PAGE 61

Justify trainer
Bob Baffert

PHOTOS BY
PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

Kentucky Derby
winner Justify



IndyCar's next generation ready to roll » Auto Racing, Page 59

